The COMMONWEAL

VOLUME XXXVII *October* 30, 1942 NUMBER 2

THE WEEK		27
SYLVANIA IS DEAD	*Jesse Stuart*	31
DR. JOHNSON AS A WRITER	*Theodore Maynard*	34
THREE POEMS	*W. H. Auden, Edward F. Garesché, S.J., Haniel Long*	37
LEWIS MUMFORD	*Edward Duff, S.J.*	38
VIEWS AND REVIEWS	*Michael Williams*	41
COMMUNICATIONS		41
THE STAGE	*David Burnham*	42
THE SCREEN	*Philip T. Hartung*	43
BOOKS OF THE WEEK		45

Man and Society in Calamity—I Remember, I Remember—The Seventh Cross—The Prodigal Women—The Valley of Decision—Storm Over the Land—Frank Norris, a Study—Three Greek Tragedies in Translation—Virginia is a State of Mind—Carry Me Back—Briefer

THE INNER FORUM	*Charles G. Burr*	52

THE COMMONWEAL *is indexed in the Reader's Guide, Catholic Periodical Index* and *Catholic Bookman.*
Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Avenue, New York
Annual Subscription: U. S. and Canada, $5.00; Foreign, $6.00

Editors: EDWARD SKILLIN, JR.
PHILIP BURNHAM (*now on duty with the armed forces*)

HARRY LORIN BINSSE, *Managing Editor*; MICHAEL WILLIAMS, *Special Editor*; C. G. PAULDING, *Literary Editor*; JOHN BRUBAKER, *Advertising Manager.*

Protection for Farm Labor

GIVEN the prevalence of "factories in the fields," the bills introduced by Senators La Follette of Wisconsin and Thomas of Utah on behalf of the workers on our "industrialized" farms are much to be commended. Such proposed legislation is based on considerable first-hand investigation as to the urgent needs of our new rural proletariat. It would parallel the Wagner Act and other labor legislation; it would deal with standards on wages and hours, social security and employment stabilization, and regulation of farm labor recruiting. The realization of such a program would be a major legislative achievement. It can come only as a result of months of the most painstaking work.

If the pressure occasioned by the war be bypassed for the moment, the present status of the American urban worker after almost a decade of New Deal beneficence presents considerable contrast to that of workers on the land. So long as he is employed, certain minimum wages are guaranteed him for a strictly limited work week. He enjoys the right—and perhaps in the case of one in three has exercised it—to organize a union to secure better working conditions. As long as there is adequate demand for his product, his job is reasonably safe. When he loses that, he can look forward to unemployment insurance for several months and after that perhaps a WPA job. He will receive a pension in his old age. Altogether a rather impressive picture, particularly when compared to his status under pre-Roosevelt laissez-faire. Yet has the American worker attained real status and security? There are cushions, but his livelihood still depends on factors far beyond his control. Inefficient management, manipulation of his company for private financial gain and, above all, unsettled general conditions can ruin him. There is every indication that his recent gains have intensified the class struggle; that the worker is far from a position of personal sharing and responsibility that would make him feel that the business he works for is his own. "Industrial democracy" is still a distant dream.

The highly seasonal character of most commercial farming is only one of the factors that calls the social utility of industrialized farming into question. How can any business operate under decent conditions and market its produce at fair prices, when its "plant" is idle much of the year? Where is the economy in shipping vast numbers of laborers from one food factory to another, not to mention the impossibility of decent family life under such conditions? All the protective legislation in the world cannot make this a desirable system even if year after year it could produce apples at two cents less per pound. Only "full-time" utilization of the land through diversified agriculture on family-size farms can serve as a tenable norm for these United States. We need emergency legislation now to rescue the victims of the factories-in-the-fields. But at the same time major emphasis should be placed on the joint resolution accompanying the proposed Senate bills. This calls for a study of the problems of the tenant farmers and small owners who comprise three-quarters of our rural population. What is needed most is a genuine long-term program that will make more widespread and attractive and humanly desirable a combination of part-time and primarily subsistence farming consonant with the needs of the American family.

Lynching and the Axis

THERE is no way to palliate or excuse or brush aside the three lynchings that have just taken place in the South. What has been said by our decent leaders, Northern and Southern, in regard to this crime, the American national disgrace—that it betokens a deep moral and social sickness, that it both symbolizes and aggravates the cleavage between the races, that it horribly stains our national name among the other civilized nations—is just as true now as when it was first spoken. And there is the added malice in the particular circumstances of the present. What took place in Mississippi last week, the dreadful

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

doing to death by a mob of a man and two fourteen-year-old boys, not because the law had refused to act on their crimes (all three were already in prison), but because they were Negroes, is a gift to our enemies of a weapon far more deadly than flying fortresses or aircraft carriers or secret explosives. Only by analyzing the day-to-day propaganda of the Axis, its feverish alertness to the policies of the democracies, its sensitiveness to every puff at tyranny, its patient and industrious distortion of every liberal action and statement, can we begin to realize how afraid the Axis is of the appeal of freedom to its own peoples. If the lifting of the stigma of alienship from our Italian non-citizens awoke fear and fury in the fascist government of Italy, what capital can be made on the other hand of our savagery against our own citizens who are born black! To the extent that the law permits, then, these special circumstances should enter into the legal judgment of the lynchers, against whom it is a relief to learn that action is already being taken. But it may not be unfair, before leaving this tragic subject, to point out that there is a lengthening column of figures on the other side of the ledger. We do not expect these figures to temper the glee or moderate the assertions of Axis propagandists. But it is legitimate for both white and colored citizens to feel a sober satisfaction that more and more Negroes are being educated; that, with whatever heartbreaking slowness, barriers are going down in industry, the professions, the military services. Most of all, surely, the hope lies in circumstances like this: that every responsible white person in the country feels himself personally affected by these recent crimes. For more and more white people are being educated too.

Americans May Eat Spaghetti

ALL the encomiums showered upon Attorney General Biddle and the President for the decision not to regard Italian residents as enemy aliens are amply deserved. The action was thoroughly in line with American tradition, as we have on numerous occasions pointed out. Furthermore, it was very good politics. What little news we get would seem to indicate that Italy's lot in the Axis partnership is proving to be more and more irksome and unpopular. Certainly what fascist sentiment has existed among Italians resident in the United States has been based more upon pride in the prestige which Mussolini succeeded in gaining for his country than upon the doctrinaire aspects of the new régime. When this prestige began to wane, one could almost see American Italians losing interest in the Duce's government. By the action the Administration has taken, it makes known to all Italians everywhere that we do not look with an unfriendly eye upon the people of the Peninsula or upon their relatives in other lands. There is only one small fly in the ointment. We read that an Army hearing board on the West Coast has excluded 54 persons thus far, both aliens and citizens, from that district, and that these included a number of naturalized Italians who have been prominent in San Francisco life. We still object to this procedure on the grounds that Army hearing boards are no proper tribunals to force a citizen to change his residence. But this is a small fly indeed compared with the hundreds of thousands of Italians who have been freed of the stigma of being officially classified as "enemy aliens" in a land they have come to love.

Nothing Could Be Simpler

"SIX Cheering Facts about the Future" is a five page article especially prepared for the November issue of the *Reader's Digest* by Bruce Bliven, editor and president of *The New Republic*. His findings: (1) "War does not pay"; (2-3-4) War is not justified by "pressure of population," "need of raw materials," "need of foreign markets or investments"; (5) "There is no instinct for war"; (6) "Emotions can be controlled." His conclusion: "To sum up, then: the scientists who know most about these matters believe that war no longer pays, that a world without war is entirely possible and that it can be attained at the end of the present conflict. All that is necessary is that we shall sincerely desire it and utilize the recently discovered facts about human nature and human institutions in order to bring it about." Wow!

Report from the North

"THANK YOU," said the waitress. "Thank you for defending our beautiful history. I never heard any English customer who knew as much about it. You were right. Forgive me if I say it." All in fluent English at a Montreal lunch counter, where I had ordered in French, talked to my British friend in English—and forgotten that hundreds of thousands of people in the Quebec metropolis know both languages. My answer, I fear, was instinctive, and in French: "Your history is worth defending. But it also has to be attacked. When I hear it scorned, I defend it. When I hear it exalted, I attack it. It is bad to be ignorant of history; it is equally bad to be its slave."

In justice it must be said that their intense preoccupation with their own history has forged a strong chain to hold French Canadians together; the substance of that history entirely explains the other chains which serve the same purpose. And so, for French Canadians, history plays a double rôle. In itself it binds them to their loyalties and it explains those loyalties. It is the fiction and the poetry of their race and people. They have pro-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

duced no great imaginative writers; they have produced more than their share of historians.

The motto of the Province is *"Je me souviens";* in the first stanza of the national anthem is the line *"Ton histoire est une épopée des plus brillants exploits."* What, an American may ask, is all this history? For French Canadians it starts with Cartier—a hundred years before Massachusetts Bay—runs through La Salle and Cadillac and Joliet and Marquette and the Jesuit martyrs, through Champlain, La Vérendrye, Laval-Montmorency, Dollard, Marie de l'Incarnation, down to Laurier and a host of lesser nineteenth century political figures. It is a history almost without stain, and deserves the adjective *belle* with which it is so often associated.

* * *

William Henry Chamberlin has written a very surfacy book. It does not get to the heart of anything. Yet it is the best book on Canada I have ever read—for a person who knows little or nothing about that country. His book is called "Canada Today and Tomorrow." I would like to quote a few lines from it. "Observers who dislike French Canada on political or religious grounds, or on both, sometimes use the word 'fascist' to describe its spirit and institutions. This, I think, is inaccurate. Like communist, fascist is too easily used as a general term of abuse. The publicist Georges Pelletier was sincere and correct when he wrote, rejecting the charge that the French-Canadians are pro-fascist: 'The French bloc in Canada loves and prizes liberty too much, in all fields, to wish for a Hitler, a Mussolini, a tyrant, whatever he may call himself. . . . No one among us considers Germany, the inspirer of the Axis, as a savior and a desirable master. To have the just sense of authority, to emphasize the blunders, to see the injustices which a democratic régime can commit sometimes when it follows a mistaken policy or falls into the hands of politicians without ideals and ideas, without culture, without balance, this is not to be pro-German or philo-fascist, or pro-nazi.'"

* * *

There are two widespread notions that need scotching. The first is that French Canadians are not only of pure French ancestry, but are predominantly of a limited French ancestry, from Normandy. On this assumption, Norman characteristics are attributed to the French-speaking majority in Quebec. If we are going to talk in terms of race and culture, let us get our facts straight. There were a lot of Normans among the early settlers, but there were also a lot of people from all over France. Since the first settlement, there has been quite some Indian blood mixed in, with more than a handful of Scotch and several pinches of Irish. There is even a half pinch of miscellaneous Latin. They are not French. They are another people.

The other notion, for which the Provincial bureau devoted to hypnotizing prospective tourists is certainly in part responsible, is that French Canada is predominantly a rural countryside, in which most of the people practice an old fashioned, self-sustaining and largely depression-proof sort of agriculture. An approach to a distributist utopia. Again, the facts belie the assumption. Some 60 percent of French Canadians live in large towns and cities and work under capitalist industrialism. What remains true is that many of them were not born that way, and so the general temper is more rural than urban. But there will soon be a proletariat, and the "problem" of French Canada will really become a problem, its history will develop wounds it has never known.

* * *

When you talk about French Canadians being dead-set against conscription for service abroad, remember a few things. The beautiful self-sufficiency of the sort of agriculture which still supports its 40 percent can ill afford to spare men and knows not how to replace them with machines. (Editors of *Life* please copy. There is a lot about St. Fidèle you did *not* publish.) That is part of the price you pay for the advantage you get. Remember also that the simon-pure classicism of Quebec's educational system, with its almost total neglect of science and technology, automatically works a certain inequality—and probably heavier casualties—for French Canadian soldiers in the mechanized army of today. And remember finally that a rural temper, based on the sort of life which makes Quebec stable and picturesque, is unlikely to be anything but provincial and limited. As it has little to do with the rest of the world, so it knows next to nothing about the rest of the world, and why should any man fight for something he knows nothing about? You cannot have your cake and eat it. Those of us who exalt the beauties of farming as a way of life should not be resentful when is brought home the effect of that way of life on national psychology.

* * *

Vichy and Dr. Goebbels flatter themselves (and our own radio bigwigs fear) that their radio propaganda is having a great effect upon the French to the north of us. All it does is to supply a few weapons to people who have no use for tyranny, who have no desire for a German victory, but who have an ancient quarrel. There is no way to settle that quarrel out of hand. Time may settle it—years and decades and perhaps centuries of time. The blame for the quarrel is not to be assigned unilaterally. The test of statesmanship is to accept the quarrel and do the best you can despite it. HARRY LORIN BINSSE.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Revolution

FOR ALL of us it started very early; the word and the images round the word, the names of the men who were revolutionaries, the great names, we were conscious of them very early. We did not know much about the revolutions or what they meant—we read conflicting testimony as to their origins and effects—we knew only, but with comforting certainty, that our own revolution was something very different from any other revolution and that it was safe, sound and moral. It was the Fourth of July; there was nothing red about it. Our revolution appeared to have eluded the necessity for displeasing civil violence, bypassed the guillotine, reached at once the acceptable and well-established status of a just war. In consequence our American revolution was disconnected in our emotions from other revolutions, in the past or contemporary, and from the revolutionary idea itself; it appeared on the surface to be entirely remote from anything to do with the proletariat and our simple acceptance of it as the starting point and foundation of our country demanded of us no decision as to the merits of revolutionary ideals and practice elsewhere and in general. A revolution that started with gentlemen—Washington, Jefferson—could hardly bring us any strong feeling of solidarity with a revolution that started, say, with Danton or Lenin.

But the name revolution still was in our minds; the Daughters of the Revolution in our midst—very fittingly. For we are not the great grandchildren of regicides; we are not tied to a revolution by any immediate fact such as that of owning lands that had been confiscated from some established church; no fears of reprisals holds alive in us a revolutionary faith. Yet a word is still a word, no matter how diluted its content and, in practice, we have a polite tendency to applaud revolution, any revolution, a vague feeling that we are against kings, a restrained sympathy for any people who, by dismissing antiquated régimes, may hope to attain our enlightened state of democracy.

There is this sympathy for revolution on one side but on the other—far more important and real—is the fact that we are a happy people contented, like Elsie, with our lot, believing in gradual reform, in improvement through consultation and consent, convinced that with the Civil War we paid the last violent costs of our unity. As a result of these contradictory sympathies the only foreign revolutions that we can possibly approve are those which we think will lead other peoples into our own green pastures. Since there is always some evidence to show that this is the intent of every revolution—the peoples of every country would like automobiles and food—our approval has been given, or at least not convincingly refused, to almost every revolution of the recent past. The confusion of our sympathies has led us to persisting uncertainty in our diagnosis of contemporary revolutionary movements.

Our trains run on time. Then if Mussolini made his trains run on time it was no doubt with the desire to give his people some of the confidence in trains that we possess. If he called the means by which he made them run on time a revolution then surely there must be good points in that revolution. If Franco said that foreign reds were planning to destroy Spain, that appealed to our general mistrust of foreign agitators, and so, on the theory of Spain for the Spanish, his revolution could not be condemned outright. As for Russia, well, they were building huge modern plants and modernizing industry, which, obviously, was an attempt to reach an American standard of living. They should be given a chance. And Hitler's revolution, when it started, sought surely to restore the Germans' pride in their country: you cannot keep a great people down. It was naïve of us, happy and confident in our system, to think that everywhere people were breaking with the past with the one idea of entering our system. Unfortunately their idea was to leave it. They said they were leaving it and they left.

We know, now, all about the revolutions we do not like. We are bargaining with some of them, allied to some of them, at war with some of them. That is water over the dam.

We are back where we started from. But now we have to make up our minds. There is the fascist-nazi revolution, and we know, now, that we do not like it. Now we have to decide what kind of a revolution we want, what kind of revolution we are fighting to bring about in the several countries of Europe, what kind of a revolution we are willing to participate in, what manner of world revolutionary system we are willing to guarantee. There is the New Order and we have decided against it on the most excellent of grounds. With what shall we replace it? We cannot go back into the past and pick up the French Revolution or the Risorgimento or our American Revolution. Archeology will not do. These revolutions were stages that led us to where we stand. They have done their job. They do not lay open the future. We have to find a new revolution with which to match the nazis and the fascists. We have to start where the fascists and the nazis stopped.

Or else we have only this, frankly, to say: we are fighting to restore the past. We have to find a new system, or we have to say that we do not believe in any new system. We have not made much progress in defining a new system in which we can believe and in which others can trust. It is difficult for us to do so, for we are not single-minded in our desires.

C. G. PAULDING.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Sylvania Is Dead

By **Jesse Stuart**

"IT'S TOO BAD about Sylvania," Bert Pratt said as he caught hold of a sassafras sprout and pulled himself another step. Lonnie Pennix was behind.

"Durn this old coal-pick," Lonnie said. "If I didn't have it I could make it all right." "I got this long-handled shovel and broad-ax and I'm making it all right," Bert answered from above. "You're a lot younger than I am. You ought'n to be grumbling."

September was here and the leaves were falling from the oaks and beeches. The backbone of the mountain was dry and hard as the bleached bone of a carcass. The buzzards floated in high circles and craned their necks.

"Funny thing about a buzzard," Bert said. "He knows when anything dies in the mountains. I've often wondered if a buzzard could smell."

"Must be a buzzard can smell," Lonnie answered.

"What do you say we blow a minute before we get to th' top," Bert said with his breath getting shorter. "I'm about pooped out. We just didn't think about the heat nor the cold when we ust to climb this mountain and get moonshine from Sylvania, did we? I've come over this old mountain many a night drunk as a biled-owl. Come right down here over these rocks with a couple o' big jugs strapped on me. Had a pistol in each hand shooting to hear my pistols crack."

The two men started again to climb the mountain. Their shirts were wet as sweat could make them. They were sticking to their backs.

"I could wring my shirt out and hang it on a grape vine to dry," Lonnie said.

"Take it easy, Lonnie, and get good foot-holts on the sandrocks," Bert answered.

"Look at the buzzards again," Lonnie said as he pointed to a cloud of circling buzzards.

* * *

"Whooie! At the top at last," Bert said. "I'd rather walk twenty miles on level ground as to climb that baby."

"When I see the shack, I have sad thoughts about poor old Sylvania," Lonnie said. "You could trade Sylvania a pistol fer licker when you didn't have the money. You could trade her corn, leather-britches, beans and turnips, fer pistols, clothes, butter, eggs, ham-meat, sow-middlins, lard, flour and corn-meal."

"Look out there, Lonnie, at that crowd, won't you!" Bert said as he stood and looked toward the shack. "How did they ever get up this mountain?"

The mules and horses were tied to the garden palings and to the little blackjack saplings in the front yard. Many of the horses and mules were bare-back and many had saddles on them. Over head the buzzards circled low.

"Shoot into the buzzards, Lonnie, and shoo 'em away."

"Don't reckon the crack of my pistol will disturb the peace of the funeral as much as the buzzards will. Up there in the air pilfering around where they ain't got no business."

Lonnie pulled the pistol from his hip-holster. He leveled it toward the turkey buzzards and pow-powed five times.

"Shooting around here and my wife a-corpse," Skinny ran from the door of his shack and shouted. "Getting the mules and horses skeered to death! It ain't good manners, boys!"

"Just shooting away the buzzards, Skinny," Lonnie said. "See 'em taking off the mountain yander. Brought one down fer I saw 'im flopping among the black-oak tops."

"That part is all right, boys," Skinny answered. "Buzzards are a perfect nuisance in a time like this." Skinny walked back inside the shack.

The men had brought their picks, broad-axes, long-handled shovels and corn-scoops to dig the grave. They had brought hand-saws, axes, hammers, nails, foot-adzes to make the coffin.

"I tell you Sylvania is a big woman," Woodridge Spears said. "Just six-hundred and fifty pounds. She's never been out'n that house since she was a little girl. She married Skinny a little hundred-pound man, and she has lived all her life in there with him. Her Pap and Ma moved out to let her and Skinny have the house. If they'd moved Sylvania out they'd a-had to tear the house down. They didn't bother about doing that."

"But she'll have to come out'n there today," Remus Wolf said. "God knows how we'll get her out. Might haf to tear the house down. Might haf to saw the door out bigger."

"Might just take the floor up and bury her under the floor," Estill Valence said. "We'd just have the furniture and the barrel to move out."

"We can't do that," George Fannin answered. "Skinny might want to jump the broom again. He wouldn't want his first wife buried under the floor."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"You're right, George," Remus said. "It would cause a lot of disturbances atterwards."

"We don't want no disturbances," Bert said with tears in his eyes. "I've come here and got moonshine when the country was dry as a bone. I was right here when the Revenooers was atter Sylvania. They come and bought some from her barrel and then showed her the Badge. She just laughed at them. 'You'll haf to get me out'n the house first,' she said. 'Atter you get me out'n the house, how are you going to get me down off the mountain?' All they could do was pour out a barrel of good licker. It wasn't no time until Sylvania had the barrel replenished and we were going back again."

The saws and axes were clicking up at the barn. You could hear the men talking and laughing as they worked.

"I'll bet that coffin is four feet wide across the bottom."

"Looks big enough for a whole family."

"We'll never get it through the door."

"Purty black-oak wood we're makin' this coffin out'n. Some say black oak ain't as good as wild cherry."

"Just put the two in the ground fer fence posts, gentlemen, and see which lasts the longest."

* * *

"Right out under the pine where Pap and Ma are buried is where I want you to dig my wife's grave," Skinny said. "Bert Pratt, you take charge of it. It's the only place up here where there's dirt enough to sink a grave."

"I'll sure attend to it, Skinny," Bert said.

Bert walked in front with a broad-ax and a long-handled shovel on his shoulder. Men followed him carrying picks, mattocks, long-handled shovels and short-handled shovels across their shoulders. They followed Bert out the mountain top, across a little sag where Skinny had a corn-patch. They walked over to the tallest pine in the grove. Under the tall pine were two graves with sandstone tombstones hewn out with broad-axes.

Where Skinny had marked the place for the grave, Bert started digging.

"I'd do anything fer old Skinny," Bert said to the men. "He's in bushels o' misery just now."

"I'd do anything fer him too," Rodney Fitch said. "There never was a better woman than Sylvania. When she sold you a gallon of moonshine you got a gallon of unadulterated moonshine and not two quarts of moonshine with a quart of water and a quart of carbide all stirred up well and shook before drinking. I don't know what we'll do without her. We won't have no market fer our corn."

"They say," Tom Hankas said as he let his pick fall against the hard mountain earth, "that you'll never miss your mother until she's gone. I say we'll never miss Sylvania until she's gone. She's been a mother to all of us."

One crew of men worked hard and fast digging the big hole. Then they got out and rested and another crew took their places and worked until they got tired. Then the third crew of men took the tools and worked until they got tired. Then the first crew came back and replaced the third crew.

"We got a lot of dirt to move before high noon," Bert reminded the men as he sat under the pine and fanned his hot face with his cap.

* * *

The lazy wind blew over the mountain top. Leaves swarmed in the wind. Leaves fell into the grave the men were digging for Sylvania. Buzzards flew above the shack while Flora Fitch and Vie Bostick worked in the shack and prepared Sylvania for burial.

"It's getting high noon," Skinny said. "It's time the boys had the grave dug."

"We got Sylvania ready fer burial," Flora Fitch said standing in the door of the shack. "We dressed 'er in that flowered silk dress she got married in."

"She allus wanted to be put away in that dress," Skinny said.

"I see them coming from the barn now with the coffin," Vie Bostick said.

"Coffin looks like a young house to me," Lonnie Pennix remarked.

Skinny walked out to the new coffin. He looks at the black oak wood gleaming in the sun.

"It's a nice job, boys," Skinny said as his bony hand tried to shake it.

"Took six of us to carry that coffin from the barn down here," Amos Chitwood said. "Black oak wood is powerful heavy."

"It'll take twelve of us to carry Sylvania to the grave, then," Pert Madden said.

"The boys have the grave ready," Lonnie said. "See 'em coming out the ridge path."

"Looks like they've all jumped in a rain-barrel," Flora said. "They are all so wet with sweat."

Skinny walked inside the shack.

"The grave's ready," Bert said, wiping sweat from his beardy face with a red bandanna then squeezing the sweat from the bandanna with his big hands. "Had a time getting through that dry ground. I had to plug five buzzards too. Hope I didn't skeer you none."

"A little shooting is not goin' to bother us none," Flora answered. "What's a-going to bother us is when we start to take Sylvania out'n the house."

"Can't we saw the door bigger?" Rodney Fitch asked.

"Just as well take one side the house out by the time you make the door big enough to take that coffin out," Vie Bostick answered.

"The chimney nearly kivers one end of the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

shack," Bert said. "Why can't we just tear it down? Won't take long."

"Bert, ask Skinny about it," Rodney Fitch said. "Tell 'im that's the only way to get her out."

Bert went inside the shack to speak to Skinny. The crowd of sweaty men waited outside. They held their working tools in their hands. The yard was filled with people. They stood and looked at the new coffin and talked about it. The horses and mules tramped around the blackjack saplings and fought the flies. The mules hee-hawed and laid back their ears and bit at the horses.

* * *

"I tell you men it was a job to get Sylvania ready fer burial," Vie said. "It'll take six powerful men to put her in the coffin."

"We'll get 'er in all right," Rodney Fitch said.

Bert came to the door.

"Boys, tear down that chimney," he said.

Bert was the first to climb the wall. Lonnie climbed after him. They stood on the clapboard roof and rolled the rocks off the chimney. Lum Tremble reached Bert up a coal-pick. Bert pried the rocks loose from the daubing where they were stuck.

"Soon have it done, boys, the way you're raining the rocks down here," Rodney Fitch said. "Stand in the clear, fellars, and see that the rocks don't roll on your toes."

The chimney was lowered to a flat pile of cornfield rocks. The hole was big enough to take the coffin through.

"All right, boys, let's take the coffin in and get Sylvania," Abraham Pitts commanded.

Three men got on a side and one on each end of the coffin. Over the chimney rocks they tugged it into the shack.

"Set 'er down easy, boys, on these poles now," Abraham Pitts said. "Don't ketch anybody's finger now. Take 'er easy . . . down . . . down . . . easy . . . down . . ."

The coffin was placed on three poles. The poles were placed on rocks so the men could get their hands under the poles. Sylvania was upon the bed now, a great heap in a flowered dress.

"About six of you strong men lift her," Bert ordered.

Bert took his handkerchief from his pocket and wiped the tears from his eyes. Many of the men shed tears. The women stood and looked on. They could not begin to lift Sylvania. They strained their backs trying to roll her into the big flowered dress they had spliced so it would fit her.

The men, one ahold of each leg, one ahold of each arm, one at the head and one at each side, lifted her from the bed. Easy, easy now, boys—easy—easy—easy—" It was a bad place to lift and hard lifting, but they placed Sylvania in her coffin.

"Couldn't a-made a better fit," Lonnie Fitch said.

"It was my wife's dyin' request that she didn't have her funeral preached nor no songs sung," Skinny said. "See that barrel over there! It's the last my wife made. It's all fer you, boys. There's the dipper over there. What you can't finish today you can finish Monday when you come back to hep me make my new chimney."

"Fellars, I'm a little thirsty," Bert said. "Let me to that dipper."

"She kept us wet through the dry season," Rodney Fitch said.

"It just takes another dipper to cool my throat," Lonnie said. "I'm hot as a lizard in a new ground fire."

The thirsty men stood around the barrel and drank like cattle around a water hole.

"I patronized Sylvania in life and I'll patronize 'er in death," Bert said. "Take your last long look at Sylvania, boys, while Lonnie gets the nails and the hammer."

The men looked at Sylvania. Strong men, tanned by the sun where their flesh was not hidden by beard on their faces, looked at Sylvania and wept. They pulled handkerchiefs and bandannas from their pockets and wiped their eyes.

"Just a lot o' drunk men crying," Rodney said. "It'll be awful before we get her to the grave. They'll all be crying. Ought to a-had the licker last."

"Who is conducting this funeral, me or you, Rodney?" Skinny asked. "I'm doing what Sylvania requested. I'm going through with it if they all get down drunk."

"Ouch, whooie, that damn big-headed hammer," Lonnie yelled. "I couldn't hit the side of a barn with it. Lord, I nearly mashed the end of my finger off trying to drive that nail."

"Let me have that hammer," Rodney requested. "I can still drive nails. Hit some people with a sour apple and they get drunk. They can't take their licker."

Rodney shaped the coffin lid and spiked it down while the men looked on.

"My poor Sylvania is gone forever," Skinny cried.

"Come away from that barrel," Bert demanded. "Do you fellars want to get down drunk and leave the corpse in a shack that has the end out'n it? Get under these poles! What do you think today is, your birthday?"

Two men got under each end of the three poles. "Get in front, Rodney," Bert ordered. "I'll get behind and tail the coffin."

* * *

Fourteen men were around the black oak coffin. The walked slowly out at the end of the house where they tore the chimney down.

"Just like picking up a house with the family in it," Rodney groaned as they walked across the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

yard and out the ridge path toward the pine. The crowd was noisy now. The men were laughing, talking and crying. The women walked behind as the men carried Sylvania to her grave. Before they reached the fresh heap of dirt under the tall pine tree, Bert pulled his pistol from his hip-holster and shot into a cloud of buzzards.

"Easy—easy—easy—take 'er easy, boys," Bert said. "Don't mash no fingers."

They lowered Sylvania's coffin by the big pine where the dirt was piled high.

"You got the plowlines ain't you, Oggle?" Skinny asked.

"I got five pair of plowlines," Oggle Fox answered.

"Put two big poles across the grave," Bert ordered. "There they lay already cut."

The men carried the green hickory poles and laid them across the grave.

"All the rest of you back to your places now," Bert ordered. "Let's lift the coffin onto the poles."

"Let's wind a minute," Eif Turnstile said. "I'm about gone."

"Wish I was planted by 'er side," Skinny screamed.

"No use to feel that way, Skinny," Lonnie consoled him.

"Take it easy, Skinny," Bert said.

"Wish I could," Skinny answered.

"Eif, you've had time to get your wind now," Lonnie said. "What do you say we lower this coffin, men? Get the plowlines under it. Two get hold of the end of each line."

The men placed ten plowlines under the coffin.

"Ready now, boys!" Lonnie said. "Heave ho! Heave ho! Heave ho!"

"Let's pull these poles from under the coffin," Bert ordered. "Four men to each pole."

The men took the poles from under the coffin while twenty men held it up with the plowlines.

"Let 'er down," Bert ordered.

The big coffin dropped slowly while two men strained at each end of ten ropes. They pulled the ropes from under the coffin. It was all over.

"May God rest Sylvania's soul," Bert said, wiping tears from his eyes with his red bandanna.

Two men took Skinny toward the shack while clouds of gray dust swirled above the busy shovels. There were words of condolence in the lazy wind's molesting the dry flaming leaves on the mountain.

Dr. Johnson as a Writer

An answer to a poem.

***By* Theodore Maynard**

THERE are three classes of Johnsonians. First there are the very large number of people who know him only from a few anecdotes and sayings, and yet find from these that he was a very fine fellow. Next come the people who read about him in Boswell, and who perhaps go on to the other biographers, but who do not bother with Dr. Johnson the writer, and who sometimes even suppose that he is not worth their bother. Finally there are those who understand that to know Johnson thoroughly it is necessary to read what he wrote, and who discover—often to their surprise—that it is very well worth reading. These alone are the true Johnsonians, though any kind of a Johnsonian is all the better a man because of his enthusiasm. Indeed, one shudders at the blackness of the heart that would not admire and love the greatest of eighteenth century Englishmen.

It so happened, however, that before he had died, full of glory, there were already born the men of the Romantic Movement who were to rebel against his literary canons and who succeeded in creating the impression that, grand as Dr. Johnson might be as a human being, he was a baleful literary influence. Certainly the literary mode that came in with Wordsworth and Coleridge was far removed from his own. He was therefore a little too readily dismissed as wordy and pompous. And this idea has found expression again in an interesting sonnet written in the September 11 issue of THE COMMONWEAL by Mr. Harold Willard Gleason. I think it calls for a few remarks to redress the balance.

Irene

There is no need for me to put up a defense for "Irene," though there was no need for Mr. Gleason to single out Johnson's one attempt at playwriting as a sample of "bathos." And he might at least not have rhymed "Irene" with "seen"—after all, Dr. Johnson knew Greek. Though the young Johnson in all probability hoped that his play would make him famous, he came to realize in later life that he lacked the dramatist's special talent. In fact, he realized it

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

when Garrick produced the play for him, and good humoredly accepted the verdict of the audience. Thirty years later, when somebody was reading his play aloud, he left the room, and explained afterwards, "Sir, I thought it had been better." And when he was told that a Mr. Pott had called it "the finest tragedy of modern times," he growled, "If Pott says so, Pott lies." In spite of which "Irene" hardly deserves Mr. Gleason's treatment.

So also, to some extent, with "Rasselas," which Johnson tossed off in the evenings of a single week in 1759 in order to pay the expenses of his mother's funeral. Unlike "Irene," it was very popular, for by then his fame was established; but it is not, considered as a story, very thrilling, however noble are many of its sentiments. Things like "I have already enjoyed too much; give me something to desire" are scattered throughout. It is certainly not negligible.

The Dictionary

Even "Dictionary" is slighted; Mr. Gleason tells us that its "ambagious" phrases "seldom now are seen." "Ambagious" may be the kind of learned word that Dr. Johnson wrote in his worst manner, but it does not at all hit off the lucid, vigorous and amusing definitions so frequently given by Johnson. That one man could single-handed do so much is astounding. By this alone Johnson put all those who use our language into permanent debt. If it became obsolete in time—as all dictionaries must—many of its definitions are still quoted, because it stands alone among dictionaries in being humorous. Here are some that are remembered. At himself he leveled the joke by defining *Grub-street* as "The name of a street in London, much inhabited by writers of small histories, dictionaries and temporary poems," and *lexicographer* as "A writer of dictionaries, a harmless drudge." At the Scots he leveled another joke that was to recoil on his own head when he called *oats* "a cereal used in England as food for horses, and in Scotland as food for men"—only to have a pawky Scot comment, "Yes, but England is famous for its horses and Scotland for its men." Had Mr. Gleason said that Dr. Johnson's etymology was imperfect, he would have been quite correct. He missed fire completely, however, when he picked out as his target the one thing that gives the "Dictionary" enduring life.

I shall come to the prose in a moment, but first I should like to touch upon the two great satires, "London" and "The Vanity of Human Wishes." Here is the extraordinary case of a man whose temperament was not at all what we consider poetical, producing by sheer force of intelligence things that are first-rate of their kind. Nobody is likely to say that this poetry is the highest kind of poetry, but nobody with a cultivated literary taste can fail to applaud such lines as:

> Fate never wounds more deep the generous heart,
> As when a blockhead's insult points the dart;

or

> Now blessed with all the baubles of the great,
> The polish'd marble, and the shining plate;

or

> Yet hope not life from grief or danger free,
> Nor think the doom of man revers'd for thee:
> Deign on the passing world to turn thine eyes,
> And pause a while from letters, to be wise;
> There mark what ills the scholar's life assail,
> Toil, envy, want, the patron, and the jail.

or the massive:

> Roll darkling down the torrent of his fate.

Yet I have not quoted at all the lines (189-220 of "The Vanity of Human Wishes") upon which Mr. T. S. Eliot pronounces: "[If they] are not poetry, I do not know what is." But I will quote his general verdict—that these two poems are "among the greatest verse satires of the English or any other language; and, so far as comparison is justifiable, I do not think that Juvenal, his model, is any better."

The Rambler Essays

I leave the satires only because Mr. Gleason does not mention them. For that matter, he does not mention the *Rambler* essays which might, perhaps, have given some weight to his argument, had he cared to use it. They were vastly admired in Johnson's own day, though even then cavilling voices were raised. Now—usually by people who have not taken the trouble to read them—they are cited as instances of the verbose and pompous. That there is some truth in the charge of pomposity cannot be denied, though one may read several *Ramblers* in succession without coming across a case of "Johnsonese." He did, however—partly because he was engaged on his "Dictionary" during the *Rambler* period, and partly because he relished "dignity" in letters, and partly because he had read too much in Sir Thomas Browne (from whom he derived a fondness for strange "scientific" words, though without catching the trick of Browne's entrancing cadences)—he did occasionally overload his pages with stiff and self-conscious locutions, as he also went in too often for parallelisms and antitheses and inversions. But not nearly so often as is supposed. In any event, he was not verbose. Even when his words are long, they deliver plain meanings plainly; and I confess that I prefer a writer who is unfailingly honest in polysyllables to one who lies in supple, simple (or, for that matter, monosyllabic) prose. No writer was ever so honest as Johnson.

But he could also be very simple in style. Take this: "When a friend is carried to his grave, we at once find excuses for every weakness, and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

palliations of every fault; we recollect a thousand endearments which before glided off our minds without impression, a thousand favors unrepaid, a thousand duties unperformed, and wish, vainly wish, for his return, not so much that we may receive, as that we may bestow happiness, and recompense that kindness which before we never understood." The words may even here be somewhat long, but they are quite without pomposity. And if a beautiful cadence is desired, here is a sentence from the fifty-first *Rambler*: "Her marigolds, when they are almost cured, are often scattered by the wind, the rain sometimes falls upon fruit when it ought to be gathered dry." Yet it is an instance of the artful rhetorical device known as a "chiasmus." Or could anything be more manly and straightforward than this passage from the Preface to his edition of Shakespeare? "Not a single passage in the whole work has appeared to me corrupt which I have not attempted to restore; or obscure which I have not endeavoured to illustrate. In many I have failed, like others, and from many, after all my efforts, I have retreated, and confessed the repulse. I have not passed over with affected superiority what is equally difficult to the reader and to myself, but where I could not instruct him have owned my ignorance. I might easily have accumulated a mass of seeming learning upon easy scores; but it ought not to be imputed to negligence that, where nothing was necessary, nothing has been done, or that, where others have said enough, I have said no more."

With all due respect to Mr. Gleason, I venture to consider that excellent prose. It is Mrs. Meynell who desires that "Johnson less than Gibbon inflated the English our fathers inherited; because Johnson did not habitually or often use imagery, whereas Gibbon did habitually use imagery, and such use is what deprives a language of elasticity, and leaves it either rigid or languid, oftener languid." No, whatever else Johnson may be accused of, he is not languid.

Mr. Gleason is most unfortunate of all in writing:

> "Lives of the Poets"? Collectors' stuff long since,
> And rare at that, grave cognoscenti tell us.

Well, I don't know what "cognoscenti" he has been consulting, but I can tell him that the "Lives of the Poets" are in both the Everyman and the World's Classics series. But even if they were not so easily available, they would still be the most entertaining short lives that we have in English literature. I might even go further and say that the life of Savage, which was published by itself in 1744, marks almost the beginning of English biography, considered as a distinct art. It is hardly too much to suggest that Johnson provided Boswell with his model. The new departure is indicated in the second paragraph of the Cowley: "Abraham Cowley was born in the year one thousand six hundred and eighteen. His father was a grocer, whose condition Dr. Sprat conceals under the general appellation of a citizen." As early as 1750 Johnson had expounded his theory of biography in a *Rambler,* concluding, "If we owe regard to the memory of the dead, there is yet more respect to be laid to knowledge, to virtue, and to truth."

In the critical parts of the "Lives" Johnson often showed himself wrongheaded, as in his disparagement of "Lycidas"; but even about "Lycidas" he had things to say worth hearing. And in his edition of Shakespeare he had proved that he was, despite his limitations, one of the great critics. Deficient as he may have been in esthetic sensibility, he was completely free of the besetting sin of literary critics—humbug. His enormous knowledge of literature and of life, combined with his strong good sense and his humor, more than make up for whatever he may have lacked.

But when he deals with the lives of his poets—many of them very small fry—he speaks out of the fulness of his knowledge, at his ease, sure of himself and sure of his audience. Kant had not yet said, "Detestable is the society of mere literary men," and Byron had not yet said:

> One hates an author that's all author,
> Fellows in foolscap aprons trimmed with ink;

but Johnson would have agreed with both. His literary men—even when they were so "literary" as Pope—are shown to us as *men.* In "Rasselas" he had told us that the business of a poet "is to examine, not the individual, but the species, to remark general properties and large appearances; he does not number the streaks of the tulip, or describe the different shades in the verdure of the forest." And it is this habit of sticking to generalities and the abstract that, almost as much as his formidable diction, has done Dr. Johnson's literary reputation most harm. All that ended when he turned biographer; now the streaks of the tulip were numbered with a vengeance. "The person of Pope," he writes, "is well known not to have been formed by the nicest models. He has, in his account of the *Little Club,* compared himself to a spider, and by another is described as protuberant before and behind"—and so on for page after page of vivid detail.

Mr. Gleason's sonnet makes me place him in the second class of Johnsonians. But there is no reason why he should not ascend into the first class—at any rate to the extent of reading the "Lives of the Poets," and being a bit more careful in future about the company of the "cognoscenti" he keeps. Upon one thing I congratulate him: he has grasped the main point about Dr. Johnson's character and sees him, as what he was, the kindest-hearted of men.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Three Poems

Mundus et Infans

Kicking his mother until she let go of his soul
Has given him a healthy appetite: clearly, her rôle
In the New Order must be
To supply and deliver his raw materials free;
Should there be any shortage
She will be held responsible; she also promises
To show him all such attentions as befit his age.
Having dictated peace,

With one fist clenched behind his head, heel drawn up to thigh,
The cocky little ogre dozes off, ready,
Though, to take on the rest
Of the world at the drop of a hat or the mildest
Nudge of the impossible,
Resolved, cost what it may, to seize supreme power, and
Sworn to resist tyranny to the death with all
Forces at his command.

A pantheist not a solipsist, he cooperates
With a universe of large and noisy feeling states,
Without troubling to place
Them anywhere special; for, to his eyes, Funny face
Or Elephant as yet
Mean nothing. His distinction between Me and Us
Is a matter of taste; his seasons are Dry and Wet;
He thinks as his mouth does.

Still, his loud iniquity is still what only the
Greatest of saints become—someone who does not lie:
He because he cannot
Stop the vivid present to think; they by having got
Past reflection into
A passionate obedience in time. We have our Boy-
Meets-Girl era of mirrors and muddle to work through,
Without rest, without joy.

Therefore we love him because his judgments are so
Frankly subjective that his abuse carries no
Personal sting. We should
Never dare offer our helplessness as a good
Bargain, without at least
Promising to overcome a misfortune we blame
History or Banks or the Weather for; but this beast
Dares to exist without shame.

Let him praise his Creator with the top of his voice,
Then, and the motions of his bowels; let us rejoice
That he lets us hope, for
He may never become a fashionable or
Important personage.
However bad he may be, he has not yet gone mad;
Whoever we are now, we were no worse at his age:
So of course we ought to be glad

When he bawls the house down. Has he not a perfect right
To remind us at any moment how we quite
Rightly expect each other
To go upstairs or for a walk if we must cry over
Spilt milk, such as our wish
That since, apparently, we shall never be above
Either or both, we had never learned to distinguish
Between hunger and love?

W. H. Auden.

Lily of Light

Lily of Light.
Bloomed from the dark and fester of our night.
Your radiance far is borne,
Like the white splendors of the Star of Morn.
Lily of Light,
Mary most pure, guide all our thoughts aright.

Summit of Snow.
Lifted in glory where the dawnings glow.
On whose clear crest the loving sunbeams cling.
Half earth's, half Heaven's; to the world below
Beacon and promise of eternal Spring.
Summit of Snow,
Virgin and Mother, help our crowded woes.

Moon of the Deep.
Flower of our midnight's purple-shadowed sleep.
Your silver-pointed ray
Shatters the dusk, and makes our darkness day.
Moon of the Deep,
Mirror of God, enlighten us, who weep.

Edward F. Garesché.

The Law

There are those flocks of sheep
One would not tend if they were real—
Dreams waking or asleep,
Shapes that are born of what men hope and feel.

Eating and drinking are
No pleasure till we know the terms
Of hunger. So the law
That from the angel reaches to the worms:

Greatest the joy that will
Be ushered in by greatest pain.
Grow and inflame me still,
Democracy; sweeten in me again.

Haniel Long.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Lewis Mumford

The Post-Christian in an Anti-Christian world.

By **Edward Duff, S.J.**

TO BE the head of Stanford University's new School of Humanities is a job requiring "intellectual guts" in the judgment of all-knowing *Time*. In choosing Mr. Lewis Mumford to inaugurate the new syllabus, the University is getting an intelligence of remarkable range, sensitiveness and toughness. It is also importing a Problem.

For Mr. Mumford's opinion of contemporary education and, indeed, of contemporary civilization is hardly a complimentary one, and as befits one with "intellectual guts," the opinion has been expressed in forthright fashion: "The Universities of Chicago, Berlin and London [Stanford, too?] have been built up during the last fifty years in the faithful image of the city that surrounds them: the same technical adroitness, the same aggressive emphasis of physical equipment, the same waste of substance in material organization and finally the same innocence of cultural values that are embodied not in statistical achievements but in a mode of feeling, thinking, acting." It should be noted at once that by "cultural values" Mr. Lewis Mumford does not at all mean esthetic values; he means goals for the good life. And it is because this quest for values has been for him an abiding passion and because of the progressive development of his thought toward traditional standards, as well as because of the growing weight of his influence, that Mr. Lewis Mumford has significance beyond his connection with Stanford's new educational venture.

This quest for values began in New York City in 1895; it was fostered by walks around the city with his grandfather; it was directed towards sociology through contact with the writings of the late Sir Patrick Geddes, encountered while taking evening courses at C.C.N.Y.; after service in the Navy during the last war (with Plato and Emerson as bunk-mates), it led to a career of intense study, travel, editing and, always, more study; it directed the affirmation in his first book, "The Story of Utopias," that "there is no escaping the problem of ends and the problem of ends, if I may be permitted a pun, belongs at the beginning"; it underlies his belief that "the basic standards of the past century were false" and is the catalyst of the eloquent prose that has indicted in luminous language the vacuity and triviality of much of modern living as "an opulence of carefully packaged emptiness"; it is the driving force of his strenuous efforts to shape the world to the heart's desire.

The search continued with evaluations of American civilization, using architecture as a symbol, in "Sticks and Stones" and literature and philosophy as the key in "The Golden Day"—called by Santayana "the best book about America if not the best American book I have ever read." With "Technics and Civilization" and "The Culture of Cities" the search became more imperative and more comprehensive, with the problems of machinery and environment explored to establish for purposes of communal action the principles on which modern conditions might be renovated. A projected third book of this series to deal with ethics, religion and education was hurried to completion under the threat of Hitler's jack-boot and disgust with the febrile liberalism of the intellectuals. It was called "Faith For Living" and offered what was hoped to be a manifesto, a moral-system and a rallying call for all men of good will.

Values

Quite a wide background for an educator; surely an impressive list of accomplishments for one whose youth was "circumscribed but not embittered by poverty." Yet these varied interests, this continual exploring in the search for "values" is, Mr. Mumford insists, not a scattering of attention. He is by intention and not by accident a Professor *der allerlei Wissenchaften,* like Teufelsdrockh or his master, Geddes. Nor would he admit that these broad surveys and probing of the forms and aims of contemporary civilization are anything but necessary background for the modern educator. The school, he believes, "occupies the central position occupied by the Church in medieval Christendom." Such a conception of education is not unknown among secular educators. But the "values" Mr. Mumford would teach and the criticisms he would make have not been widely heard in academic circles. Nor are most of his views welcome among the educational trade unions—as Mr. Mortimer Adler could tell him from experience. Whether the students will bear such criticism with any larger equanimity

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

than the professorial fraternity remains to be seen. Mr. Mumford is going to be a Problem.

A many-sided man is Lewis Mumford. Perhaps he is most popularly known as a critic of architecture, as the author of "The Sky Line" column in *The New Yorker,* whose penetrating and frequently acid comments on current building are the terror of metropolitan designers. Mr. Mumford's interest is more comprehensive than the professional critic: he seeks in his "approach to modern problems from their historic side to estimate the forces that from one age to another have conditioned our architecture and altered its forms." His large-scale judgment is uncompromising:

> Our important architecture is an architecture of compensation: it provides grandiloquent stones for people who have been deprived of bread and sunlight and all that keeps men from becoming vile. Behind the monumental façades of our factory system; and beyond the great cities lies a countryside whose goods are drained away, whose children are uprooted from the soil on the prospect of easy gain and endless amusements, and whose remaining cultivators are steadily drifting into the ranks of an abject tenantry. This is not a casual observation: it is the translation of the last three census reports into plain English.

And the educator-to-be drew the bitter conclusion:

> The chief thing needful for the full enjoyment of this architecture is a standardized people. Here our various educational institutions from the advertising columns of the five cent magazines to the higher centers of learning, from the movie to the radio, have not altogether failed the architect.

The contemporary chaos, Mr. Mumford tells us, derives from the break-up of the European synthesis of the thirteenth century. Mr. Mumford believes that the basis of the medieval scheme was a dream, but he knows that when it lost its hold over men's minds a dissolution began. He knows that there once was a time when: "Over the daily life lay a whole tissue of meanings, derived from the Christian belief in eternity: the notion that existence was not a biological activity but a period of moral probation. . . ." From the unsettlement of Europe came the settlement of America; the disintegration and fragmentation were transported, and instead of fulfilling the promise of a new culture under new horizons, the break-down finally produced our contemporary mechanistic civilization. Fifteen years ago Mr. Mumford felt that the process of renewal was inherent in the vision of the prophets of the Golden Day — Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman, Melville and Hawthorne — giants who absorbed all the elements of the American environment and created a new pattern of experience and character. Today he seeks inspiration from the inherited tradition of the ages for the pressing task of rebuilding the City—as the brown flood comes down upon it.

In the face of the outburst of organized barbarism (Mr. Mumford insists) it is a case of all hands on deck to save the ship! All our cherished and outworn illusions of progress—"that most provincial notion of a most provincial nineteenth century"—must be jettisoned; all the false pride, the cynicism, the confidence in material strength unbuttressed by moral purpose must go. We must face facts. We must, to begin with, realize that there are other areas of knowledge than those offered by science, which after all does not lead "into the core of life"; in our devotion to instrumentalism, we have forgotten that its gains have been accompanied by a corresponding loss "in that part of the thinking process covered by dialectics." And we must face the reality of moral evil; know it for what it is, sin, and spurn as a sign of mental immaturity the peurile effort of pragmatic liberalism to consider radical evil as evidence of "mental immaturity." For the whole mentality "which grew up in the eighteenth century out of a rather adolescent pride in the scientific conquest of nature," the whole tradition stemming from "Voltaire who thought that the craft of priests was chiefly responsible for the misery of the world and Rousseau who thought that man was born naturally good," that whole depersonalizing, morally enfeebling scheme Mr. Mumford repudiated in a public controversy with the editors of *The New Republic,* culminating in an article he called "The Corruption of Liberalism." We must also put a stop to the sabotage going on in our midst: "For example, it has become a commonplace in 'progressive' schools of law during the last generation to hold that all law is judge-made"; and we must have done with the literary approach that pictures "life as merely not dying." The forces of economic injustice never treated the Joads half as inhumanly as their author did.

In short, we must have standards. Without a scale of "values," "the choice between cannibalism and vegetarianism becomes only a matter of taste, as the Russian premier said of the difference between communism and fascism."

Mr. Mumford has come far from the days when in his "Herman Melville" he would confront life's essential blankness and meaninglessness with an animal faith, a plasmic sense making contact with the ancient cycle of life and nature—a metaphysic that bears a curious resemblance to Alfred Rosenberg's more influential aberrations. Now, faced with the massive power of organized tyranny, Mr. Mumford asserts a high purpose to moral endeavor; he looks for allies to overcome the vacuity, obtuseness, the cringing spirit of the "passive barbarians" of the democratic world; he would rally those who hold traditional creeds as well as the inheritors of "ideal" liberalism (translate: *humanists*) to subscribe to a Faith for Living energizing a common program that would discipline and develop the person, protecting the family, rehabilitating the land, engendering the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

spirit of sacrifice in economics and service in politics.

Such a program, manifestly calling for a refashioning of America's commonly accepted "values," will be spoken by no friendly voice in Stanford's halls. Mr. Mumford is going to be a Problem.

But if Mr. Mumford and his ideas are a problem for Stanford, they present an even greater problem for Mr. Lewis Mumford. He has broached questions that do not, as Mr. Mumford's historical analysis itself hints, admit of solution apart from the Catholic scheme of things. And Mr. Mumford is not a Christian.

In point of fact he fails to find any source for his "values" in any other ultimate than their necessity and utility. Society, he proclaims, is dying, paralyzed not for lack of means but for lack of purpose, and he would, as all good men, hope and work for the recovery of vision that made meaningful other eras. Like Christopher Dawson, whom in scope he resembles, he knows that every civilization has its inherent spiritual dynamic, its religion. Mr. Mumford is all for a faith to energize civilization towards life-enriching goals; he is even in favor of Catholicism if it can be liberated from the Italian influence which, he insists with an irritating obsession, has made the Church subservient to fascism. This is all very well, but the essential question of any faith that will matter for living is not whether it is desirable or not, nor even whether it is the answer to the imperative need for more than bread, but simply whether it is *true* or not. And "true" here means not whether it satisfies one's preferences, but whether its assertions correspond to reality. It is a treacherous inversion and one well worth Mr. Mumford's contemplation, that to advocate religion because it will serve excellently as a social tonic in time of crisis is to imitate the most vicious feature of nazism, its perversion of truth and debasing of the mind.

"The last temptation is the greatest treason
To do the right deed for the wrong reason"

—as Mr. T. S. Eliot pointed out in his play on Saint Thomas à Becket's resistance to the claims of omnipotent government. A religious sentiment that is contrived out of the will-to-believe in order to inspirit our social and cultural goals, noble as these undoubtedly are, is no defense against tyranny. Indeed, such an *ersatz* creed will indubitably spawn its own tyranny. In any case it cannot stand up to the hideous face of organized brutality as did Nurse Cavell, who knew that patriotism is not enough; for it cannot assert the decisive fact that each individual soul is of imperishable value for the very decisive reason that it is of imperishable substance, made by God, remade to the divine likeness by a historical person, Jesus Christ, through the historical fact of His death, and destined to know an everlasting, personal, conscious future.

Religion is truth or it is nonsense. And here Mr. Mumford is a problem to his readers. His knowledge of the evolution of social institutions is comprehensive, his information on medieval Catholic administration, ceremonial and influence is recondite. (In passing it must be remarked that his understanding of the position of the Church today and her supposed political interests is often ignorant and bad-mannered.) Yet nowhere is there any evidence that he has asked himself the obvious question: is it *true*. Christianity he casually considers—along with several blear-eyed nineteenth century Germans who, incidentally, also fathered nazism—a myth. But it is a *muthos*, a narrative that has appealed to thousands of millions through the centuries not because of the cohesion and loveliness of the story, nor the solace it provides, nor even because it explains much that would otherwise be meaningless. It was accepted because it is true, because its affirmations were verifiable historically. There is no indication that Mr. Mumford has ever tried to verify these assertions, ever challenged these claims. At a definite date a man was born who on a definite date asserted He was God, on account of which on a definite date He was put to death and three days later He rose again. Has Mr. Mumford ever seriously inquired whether these statements are true and if they are, what consequences follow? They are the reasons why people are Christians; yet to these assertions Mr. Mumford presents an opacity that is almost pathological and which in a man of his acuteness and earnestness and influence betrays a superficiality and/or smugness that is frightening, given the task before all men of good will. Or would this be what Julian Benda meant by the "Treason of the Clerks"?

Indeed, he had perhaps best first of all decide whether (with Lloyd Morgan) God is a process, or (with those whose cooperation he invites for common action) God is a Person. And he might ponder especially in these days of trial what consolation the Congregationalist minister offered Emerson's father by reminding him that he had, after all, at least outlived his teeth.

The "City of God"

Mr. Mumford wants a biodynamic civilization, ordered to richer, more intense living, where man the many-sided can develop himself in all the glory of his manhood in his personal and family spheres, where the City will be fashioned to provide a life-inspired, life-orientated environment. Such—whether he knows it or not—is not any jerry-built "City of Man"; such citadels of pride have fallen before barbarian onslaughts in times past and the lesson of their demise has been hymned by greater social philosophers than he—Saint Aug-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ustine, for instance. And it is pertinent to observe that the synonym for the City of Man is Pandemonium which as Father D'Arcy has reminded us, is the name of the place where God is not. The vision of the true City, the proper home of man, which Mr. Mumford has glimpsed from afar and which all men of good will must labor to establish, was in the mind of Pius X (he who insisted on verifiable meaning behind talk on "religion") when he said: "Civilization has no longer to be discovered nor the new City to be built in the clouds. It has existed and it exists; it is the Christian civilization—the Catholic City. It is only necessary to keep on founding and rebuilding it on its natural and divine foundations."

Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

I WAS much impressed, as most of THE COMMONWEAL's readers, I think, must have been, by Mr. J. L. Benvenisti's remarkable article in last week's issue, "Russia and Brotherhood." The profound sympathy for Russia which is felt by the British people, and which is producing deep-seated emotional and spiritual stimulus to social action among them—in a more powerful fashion, he considers, than any other force for a century—is not primarily due to any increase of belief in communism, according to Mr. Benvenisti, but rather can only be explained by an upsurge of the British spirit to welcome a similar upsurge of the Russian spirit, inspired by a vast resurgence of Christian principles. "Behind all the Marxist nonsense," as Mr. Benvenisti phrases the phenomenon, "it is the Christian flame that is kindling this country."

Coincidentally, just as I was reading this important interpretation of the heroic behavior of the Russian people in this hour of their supreme ordeal, and of the meaning it has for the British people, another article dealing with Russia and religion came to my attention, in the form of Mr. Elmer Murphy's weekly Washington article issued by the NCWC to the diocesan press. Mr. Murphy calls attention to the "Congress of American-Soviet Friendship," to be held in New York, November 7 and 8, and reports that the promoters of this project, led by Mr. Joseph E. Davies, its honorary chairman, are being criticized in many Washington circles because in the prospectus of their movement they completely ignore the basic questions of religion and freedom of conscience in Russia. As a means of furthering the growth of "better understanding between the Soviet and the American people," Mr. Murphy says, the Congress could be much more effective if it opened up a "thorough examination of the attitude of the rulers of Soviet Russia toward that vital one of the four freedoms—freedom of religion."

It is to be sincerely hoped that it is not too late for the forthcoming Congress of American-Soviet Friendship to amend its program. Among the subjects it has announced for panel discussions are such themes as Science, Women in the War, Public Health and Wartime Medicine and Child Care in Wartime. Very important matters, indeed. All are integrally connected with the subject which is not on the agenda, religion. Why should not the directors of the movement repair this glaring omission? It is not merely the attitude of the rulers of Soviet Russia toward religion and freedom of conscience and freedom of education and cultural activities stemming from religion that is of vital concern to the American people; but also, and perhaps of even more importance, there is our interest in the question dealt with by Mr. Benvenisti, namely, the extent to which the Russian people are influenced by and moving toward more conscious allegiance to the dynamic force of their ancient and never extinguished Christian faith.

Mr. Davies, in a statement dealing with the aims of the Congress, declares that the Russians are "fighting our fight when they fight Hitler." He praises the Russians for "holding the fort for world democracy," and lauds them for "the magnitude of the sacrifices they have made in our common cause." All this is just and proper—up to a point not mentioned by Mr. Davies and the program builders of the Congress, yet the neglected point is the very key-stone of the arch of Soviet-American relations, namely, the question of religious freedom in Russia. The great majority of Americans hold firmly to the belief that the fort of world democracy can only be built on the rock of religious freedom, and that the common cause of the nations and peoples fighting against Hitler must embrace, indeed must be founded upon, liberty for religion. The Congress should frankly face that fact and as frankly and fully deal with it. To avoid it is to play into the hands of Hitler, and the hands of rabid and irreconcilable reactionaries who make use of Soviet Russia's official persecution of religion in the past, and the silence of officialdom in Russia today as to the fate of religion in Russia in the future, as their most effective weapon of propaganda against all measures of social reform which seem to weaken their own material interests.

Communications

PARNASSUS GOES TO JAIL

Yakima, Wash.

TO the Editors: Your courageous and sincerely Christian policy came to the fore very strongly in your October 9th issue with its editorial on Marian Anderson, H. P. Howard's fair and instructive article on Japan and the realistic and just appreciation of the Constitution by Francis Downing who raised this question above the slogans and politics of the day. The common sense of Mortimer Adler was very refreshing too. I think this issue was again one of those which make all of your readers wish you should go on and hope that the draft board does not do what lack of financial support has not been able to do in the past.

There is one item in Miss Genevieve Cowles's article on prisons on page 591 dealing with the remedies for our

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

present system of jailing and segregating which interests me very much.

A few years ago I wrote an article in this magazine on that very subject ("Prisons and Penance," October 27, 1939). I suggested those very same "cities of refuge," taking as my model not the Old Testament but our own monasticism. If seclusion is what some of our so-called criminals need, let us fill their segregated life with all the values our faith has to offer: true penance, the fullness of our liturgical life, the blessings of a religious community and the uplifting feeling that they are doing useful work in a way which nobody else could accomplish. May I repeat my appeal for prison-monasteries under the supervision of not only the Church but the competent secular authorities in which any man or woman whose character leads to conflict with law and society may live a life of penance, vicarious suffering and productive labor in a brotherhood of Faith built on Christ? I hope this cause is great enough to allow me to refer your readers back to my article without being accused of blowing my own horn! Miss Cowles and her valiant associates, among whom I discover my dear late friend Dean Ladd and his wife, have laid before the Christian of our times a problem which Christians of the past have not yet solved. The mustard seed is still growing!

H. A. Reinhold.

Emmitsburg, Md.

TO the Editors: We have just read with much interest the article entitled "Parnasus Goes to Jail." We were quite surprised (to put it mildly) to see it stated that Catholics outnumber Protestants four to one in the prisons of Connecticut. Can any one on your staff furnish us with an explanation for that state of affairs? It certainly cannot be explained by a preponderance of Catholic population in the state; neither can it be a mere accident, or coincidence so to speak.

Furthermore, why has the author had to plead in vain for ten years to get a priest to look after the spiritual needs of Catholic prisoners in a certain town? There seems to be gross neglect of duty somewhere. These pleas must have been made to persons in authority and we would scarcely suspect that they were made to police officials or prison wardens. Does such an experience as that help to explain why so many Catholic prisoners? Maybe the idea is to deprive prisoners of spiritual aid so that Catholics will be more careful about going to such a place! Rev. E. S. Berry.

BOUQUET

McChord Field, Wash.

TO the Editors: I have just finished the September 11 issue of The Commonweal and decided to let you know how much all of your articles are appreciated in this quarter. I'm a little late perhaps, but a changing address keeps me from receiving The Commonweal first-hand, so I'm always just a bit behind times.

The article that especially caught my eye was "Speaking Practically." In two years of army life, the first half with the rank and file and the last half with a commission, I've found that the fiercest writing and talking men usually are those whose hides are in the least danger. As life becomes increasingly dear, men think more and say less—at least about how courageous they will be under fire. Let me thank Mr. Paulding for his timely article. Let me also suggest that he need not stop with Sam Grafton and France, as I can think of any number of prominent writers who could be brought under the ax. There are those who write in the same vein of what is now a scorched US, but will in time be a war-torn and weary country along with France. Or is it too much to ask that a little sane thought be used by those who do their best to fashion that phantom, public opinion.

Once again thanks for a sane publication and keep up the good work. There are signs that the US is going a bit wild and your sanity will be sorely needed when peace is ours once again. Lieut. W. J. Moore, A.C.

The Stage & Screen

Beat the Band

LAST WEEK I pondered briefly the question of what constitutes a hit musical. Once or twice in a decade, a John O'Hara, say, comes forth with a fresh slant and has the good luck to pair up with a team like Rodgers and Hart who can match his book with fresh tunes and lyrics.

But "Pal Joey" was a freak. George Abbott, its producer, understands that by and large it's a waste of time to worry about the book of a musical. Much safer to blend girls, music, dancing and comedy according to the formula which visiting salesmen from Kansas City and Milwaukee have come to associate with the sum of four dollars and forty cents.

Mr. Abbott also understands that four dollars and forty cents is not hay. If they don't demand novelty, his customers at least expect luxury. George Abbott has always eschewed the luxury of big names. The luxury of "Beat the Band" is three super-colossal production numbers: the finales of both acts ("America Loves a Band" and "The Four Freedoms" à la Calypso) and an item early in the second act named "Steam Is on the Beam." The latter is the climax of the show, and it's quite a climax. If you don't like hot music, you'll wish you had plugs in your ears, but if you do, you'll find it a masterpiece of fast, brash, exciting, brilliantly-accelerating tempo. It succeeds in translating into visual terms the terrific culminating lift of a good swing band at its utmost climax.

The plot of "Beat the Band," in case you care, has to do with the leader of a jive band who is maneuvered by his irresponsible brother into impersonating the godfather of a young heiress from Latin America. The action seesaws from a New York casting agency to a parkside penthouse to the boiler room of a Washington hotel where the hero's band is exiled after a scrap with the management. The tone and tunes alternate between sweet and hot, but the humor is consistently and tiresomely anatomical.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Veteran Jack Whiting plays the band leader; his delivery of the more romantic lyrics such as "Let's Comb Beaches," "Every Other Heartbeat" and "Keep It Casual" is pleasant enough, but he severely strains his facial muscles trying to counterfeit a juvenile, and he resembles a hep cat about as much as Herbert Hoover does. The bulk of the cast is recruited from Mr. Abbott's favorite nightclubs. Romo Vincent, as the flesh peddler, is sometimes funny, sometimes a fat man being cute. Jerry Lester contributes a remarkable repertory of sound effects. Leonard Sues, who highlighted "Johnny 2x4," both looks and sounds a hot young man with a horn. Susan Miller, whom Mr. Abbott discovered on a vaudeville program, is a fresh and attractive heroine, although her voice flattens when she forces it.

David Lichine, of the ballet, did the dances—more successfully, it seemed to me, in the big production numbers than in the incidental numbers. Book by George Marion, Jr., and George Abbott; music by Johnny Green; lyrics by George Marion, Jr.—besides the ones mentioned above, I remember with most pleasure "The Afternoon of a Phoney" and "Song of Two Islands." Like the show as a whole, Freddy Wittop's costumes improve as the evening advances; Samuel Leve's sets play entertaining tricks with perspective. *(At the 46th Street.)* DAVID BURNHAM.

Someone Is Going To Get Hurt

IF EVER a man looked as if he were walking to his doom, it is Joseph Cotten as he goes on the *"Journey Into Fear."* This American engineer who has been doing some work for the Turkish navy suddenly finds that he has become a military objective. German agents are anxious to do away with him because he carries important plans in his head. So the chief of Turkey's secret service (Orson Welles acting very theatrical in a costume Alfred Lunt might have worn in "The Guardsman") suddenly whisks Cotten away from his wife (pretty Ruth Warwick as the prosaic spouse) onto a cattle boat with a strange and frightening group of shipmates. Although a ballistic expert, our plain engineer cannot use a gun. "Why shouldn't I be frightened? I'm not used to people shooting at me!" he exclaims with a pale face. You'll be frightened too as Cotten makes his way along dark corridors and among mysterious people on his boat. Some are friendly (Dolores Del Rio, Frank Readick, Agnes Moorhead, Edgar Barrier) and some are out to finish him off (Jack Moss, Eustace Wyatt).

It's all very scarey in the half darkness. This time producer Orson Welles' method of shooting his scenes with very little lighting is most justifiable and adds to the eeriness of his story. The screenplay was written by Welles and Joseph Cotten; and was directed by Norman Foster. But it is difficult to criticize their work because the film is so badly edited and cut that one can hardly tell what these men had in mind. The original novel by Eric Ambler included excellent characterizations. The film hints at them in the underplaying of Cotten as the unruffled American, Wyatt as the confident, scientific, cruel German, Everett Sloane as the bungling, nervous

B. ALTMAN & CO.
FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK

come in and see our

magnificent collection of

LEOPARD COATS

319.00*

beautifully marked skins. Dashing young models. As smart over town clothes as it is over your country classics. third floor

*plus 10% Federal excise tax

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Turk. But the film has so many loose ends, so many unexplained side issues that one is left confused. And the finale, with half the cast crawling around the ledge of a building in a pouring rain, is almost a parody of Alfred Hitchcock's technique. One can hardly blame Welles for this film, but it must be regretted that "Journey Into Fear" is only an intelligent mistake that almost made the grade.

Alan Ladd is the lad who gets hurt in *"The Glass Key."* And boy! does he take a beating! It is William Bendix who administers the punishment. Bendix plays a big, dumb bruiser whose chief pleasure seems to be in mawling Ladd. Of course he throws in other miscellaneous bits of violence—such as strangling Joseph Calleia. The film goes in too heavily for this kind of rough stuff. Although Dashiell Hammett's original novel emphasized brutality, it is unfortunate that director Stuart Heisler found it necessary to be so explicit in his scenes of torture: It is also unfortunate that Jonathan Latimer, who wrote the screenplay from the Hammett novel, couldn't have made clearer the motives of his characters. The film is frequently difficult to follow, and with all its ignoble people, one wonders if it is worth the effort. However several of the performances are unusually interesting.

Brian Donlevy is the familiar hard-boiled political boss, "the biggest crook in the state," who is mighty with his fists but as gauche as the clocks on his sox. Because he falls for the reform candidate's daughter (Veronica Lake), he supports this candidate (Moroni Olson) for governor —thus upsetting his friends and enemies alike. But when his young sister (Bonita Granville) falls in love with the candidate's no-good son (Richard Denning), and when this playboy is found murdered, suspicion points to Donlevy.

His principal enemy, Joseph Calleia, does his dirtiest dirty work to get Donlevy hanged for the murder, while Alan Ladd, who is stubbornly loyal to Donlevy, suffers vicious battering from Calleia's henchman as he tries to prove his boss's innocence. Perhaps Ladd gets the beating he deserves for mixing his brainy, handsome head with such mugs. Director Heisler offers some effective scenes but they are on the cruel side of the ledger; at times the film's bluff brutality becomes nonsensical. Although you have no feeling for any of the characters concerned, their actions succeed in leaving you wilted.

It is Reginald Denny who gets the worst mauling in *"Eyes in the Night."* Secret agents of some foreign country do the pummeling. The country is never mentioned, but some of these secret agents have very German names.

However, violence is only incidental in the film. Its most unusual note is that its detective is blind; and half of the fun and excitement of the picture is provided through following the sleuthing, scenting and methods of this crafty blind man. Another of the film's merits is that it brings Ann Harding back to the screen. Several of the characters call your attention to the fact that she is "as beautiful as ever," but this is entirely unnecessary as anyone can see how attractive she is. It is Miss Harding who enlists the aid of the blind detective (Edward Arnold) when her stepdaughter (Donna Reed doing the best she can with an unconvincing, nasty rôle) falls in love with a former admirer of Ann. This man is found dead. The detective follows the trail to Ann's house and discovers himself in a nest of enemy agents who are trying to rob Ann's husband (Denny) of his invention.

The story is not by any means compelling, but Fred Zinnemann has directed the script and cast to hold your interest. Even when the plot is not entirely credible, the suspense, the blind man's maneuvers and the outstanding performance of "Friday," Arnold's dog who is his seeing eye, will keep you absorbed.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

SCREEN

RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL

Showplace of the Nation — Rockefeller Center

The play that swept Broadway with laughter . . . becomes an hilarious torrent of screen fun . . . a picture with only one purpose—to entertain.

ROSALIND RUSSELL
BRIAN AHERNE • JANET BLAIR

"MY SISTER EILEEN"

A Columbia Picture

ON THE GREAT STAGE

"CONTRASTS"—A lively, spectacular revue, produced by Leonidoff, with Rockettes, Corps de Ballet, Glee Club and specialties. Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of Erno Rapee.

First Mezzanine Seats Reserved. Circle 6-4600

LECTURES

W. COLSTON LEIGH, Inc.

THE LEIGH BUREAU OF LECTURES, CONCERTS AND ENTERTAINMENTS

LEIGH LECTURERS include such outstanding people as EVE CURIE, MORTIMER J. ADLER, WILLIAM AGAR, PRINCE HUBERTUS ZU LOEWENSTEIN, BERTITA HARDING, the Rev. FRANCIS X. TALBOT, PRINCESS PAUL SAPIEHA, BARON JOSEPH VAN DER ELST and many others.

Write for our illustrated folder listing the best people available in the Lecture, Concert and Entertainment field.

521 Fifth Avenue — New York, N. Y.

STAGE

"The results are stunning."—*Atkinson, Times*

EDDIE DOWLING — JULIE HAYDON in

Saroyan's Best Play

HELLO OUT THERE

with G. K. Chesterton's "Magic"

BELASCO THEATRE, 44th St. East of Broadway | Evenings at 8.40. $3.30 to 55c | Mats. Wed. & Sat. 2.40. $2.20 to 55c

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books of the Week

The Four Horsemen

Man and Society in Calamity. Pitirim A. Sorokin. Dutton. $3.00.

"THE STRUGGLE" between the "democracies" and the Axis, according to the author in a note on page 332, "is by no means one of totalitarianism versus democracy: it is rather a struggle of rival totalitarianisms for values that have little to do with either of the two ideologies." To him it is thoroughly imperialistic war, the old struggle for grazing ground, wells and other material things for which humanity has been fighting for the last 5,000 years. As if sensing how this statement and the general contents of his book might affect the public, he says: "Many ideologies popular in time of peace are branded 'fifth column propaganda' in war-time. A hero in time of peace may become a traitor in time of war, if he expresses opinions different from those prevalent in the government and the masses." This may serve as a curtain raiser for this book by the famous Harvard sociologist, whom the jacket acclaims as one of the master minds of this generation and who is influencing a great many of our more intellectual men as well as colleagues of his in less prominent positions. But let us turn to the thesis of the author before we examine its consequences.

Mr. Sorokin examines man's reaction to calamities, of which he enumerates the four major ones: famine, war, pestilence and revolution. Using the inductive method he is naturally forced to cover the whole of human history in a few sweeping surveys. This has been done by great sociologists like Marx, Spengler, Toynbee, and all of them, although most of them were more careful, have exposed themselves to the reproach of having used Procrustes's system to make facts fit their preconceived theories. At bottom there lurks always a determinism which debases the history of humanity to a sort of vegetative growth, obeying iron laws of nature and blossoming and fading like the forests and fungi of our earth. With the one difference that Karl Marx had an upward trend, while the others, even if they deny it in so many words, offer the desolating picture of humanity moving around in cycles which may differ in the amount of increasing sophistication and civilization, but which in the end have no answer as to the meaning of it all. Marx also differs from them in his messianic urge, his hate and love, while these men coolly analyze the gruesome spectacle of a senseless process. If you make Jesus one of the many founders of religions, together with Mohammed, Confucius, Buddha, Zoroaster, then there is of course no room for the God-Man and the absolute claims of Christianity.

A great part of the book deals with the obvious and is full of humorless truisms. Even its great discovery that calamities "polarize" humanity, i.e. split it into saints and sinners, strong and weak, good and bad, would hardly justify such scientific pomp as the author wastes on hundreds of pages. This smile-provoking "scientific acriby" thus describes at great length the behavior of a person in the initial stages of smallpox, typhus, cholera, etc. There is a great deal of dead weight of this kind in the book. "The cowardly soldier may lie down, or flee to a near-by forest and remain there for hours and days, instead of attacking or counter-attacking. The courageous soldier will proceed to the attack and stubbornly engage the enemy." I think we have heard that somewhere before!

Man has never entirely been crushed by calamities. In more than one way disaster has even had healthy consequences for the survivors. While many turned to frivolity, crime and atheism, a sound minority took the opposite road in an equally decided way. Strangely enough the author, who gives no indication that he is affiliated with any church or faith, enumerates religion among the positive values of humanity and seems to subscribe to Christian ethics on the whole. I have not read any of his earlier books which may contain the key to this riddle. Otherwise we would have to assume that religion, in the author's mind, is an "attitude" of healthy humanity with no transcendent and objective value. To classify the Friday observance of Catholics under taboos sounds grotesque in a scientific book.

The greatest objection which I, as a democratic Christian, have to Mr. Sorokin's book is his use of the word "totalitarian." If a government in an emergency restricts civil liberties, assumes economic leadership and makes its omnipresence felt in a way which the average freedom loving man finds hard to bear, the author calls this totalitarian. Thus he finds all armies patterns and incitements to totalitarianism. For him England, nay, the US, are just as totalitarian right now as Germany, Italy, Spain and Russia. (This explains why a certain kind of "appeaser" regards him as a prophet.) But is that the commonly accepted meaning of totalitarian? If it were so, the author's contention that ancient Egypt, Athens, Rome, Napoleon and Bismarck were birds of the same feather with Hitler and his colleagues would be true. Then his attitude of "wise" resignation and Olympic aloofness towards this foolish world would be justified. But in the past the best thinkers have always seen in nazism and its ugly brothers not a thing different from democracy in emergency only and by degree, but different from it in essence. What makes a dictatorship or emergency rule totalitarian? Not the fact of interference with our political and economic life, but the substitution of itself as a religion and the raising of the dictator to the rôle of at least a semi-divinity. Nobody in his five healthy senses could say that the English have put Winston Churchill in Christ's place, and Mr. Sorokin could get any diocesan paper from the next newsstand to find out that the US neither worships at the shrine of Roosevelt nor mistakes "Eleanor" for a celestial virgin. I am surprised to find such a mistake, because I refuse to believe that this book was intended as propaganda. The—almost—economic materialism of the author, who regards ideologies with the eyes of Marx and believes firmly in economic determinism, makes him unfit for leadership among the followers of Christ, especially after Maritain's "True Humanism" and Mounier's "Personalist Manifesto." In his eyes there is an "essential" similarity between the régime of the Roman caesars and Lenin-Stalin! This judgment appears to be as superficial as his claim that victory goes to the more regimented country, while democracy must lose, especially if he believes that regimentation is totalitarianism. If Bolshevism in its last analysis is only a disguised form of calamity-economy cloaked with ideology, then all these fearful events become nothing but contractions and expansions of the body economic, and humanity is nothing but a giant oyster contracting and expanding, whirling individuals back and forth in the whirlpool its motions create, like microbes.

The inductive method of the author is responsible for his procrustean generalizations. The consequences of such a book on the intellectual élite can only be disastrous,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

as Spengler was disastrous for the German intellectual élite in and before 1933. It conditions minds for that tired kind of wisdom and resignation which surrenders to the strong leader who is willing to end their misery, men like Hitler or his counterpart. There is a long list of German, Scandinavian, English, French and Spanish intellectuals whose spineless intellectualism made them willing collaborationists with one of the blind forces of history. If they are all alike, if the ideologies are only a campaign "mystique," a myth to rouse to heroism for no cause whatsoever, then why not join up and be on top as long as it lasts? The next best leader of the masses is as good as any one to this kind of mentality. They are above these things: ideology, religion, faith.

In its consequences this might be a demoralizing book. As a matter of fact the author is already being quoted by a number of intellectual appeasers who think that the fight for "democracy" (their quotation marks!) is good enough for the masses. They "know" we are just fighting to retain our economic empire and our material standard of living. They also "know" that Sorokin's inevitable laws govern history, and they are indifferent to what camouflage any leader uses. It really is a calamity which creates the same reactions anywhere in individuals as well as society, inevitably. The author may say that one should not judge a book from its possible consequences. He may require that we stick to his facts and their representation. Well, we have done it and found him wanting in his first principles, his philosophy, his method and the consequences. He quotes a very wise passage from Thucydides on the transformation of conduct wrought by calamity. "Words had to change their ordinary meaning. . . . Reckless audacity came to be considered courage . . . ability to see all sides of a question, inaptness to act on any!" He certainly sees a different side of the question "totalitarianism versus democracy" from that seen by the masses, the government and great and honest leaders like Maritain, Don Sturzo and those right in the middle of the present calamity in invaded countries. What action does he recommend?

H. A. REINHOLD.

BIOGRAPHY

I Remember, I Remember. André Maurois. Harper. $3.00.

THE autobiography of André Maurois is the story, written by Mr. Herzog, of a family migration from Alsace to Normandy, the patriarchal Jewish family life in which the son was reared—and what came of it. He grew up under the stern necessity for efficiency, both as a Jew and as a Frenchman. He was the fragile child who leads all his classes and something, one feels, of that precocity (an almost unparalleled bilingual talent it is now) clings to him still. He has felt the lash of envy, he has perhaps not wholly escaped smugness, but there is a truly disarming simplicity, humility he calls it, in the way he tells his story.

The family was an industrial and an industrious one and young Herzog, after his brilliancies at school and a year of hardening in the army, entered the business and there it seemed his literary ambitions were doomed to wither. Then the war placed him as liaison officer with the B.E.F. He was ripe for change from the daily dreariness of the factory to the gay, reckless, intermittent fury of army life. They delighted him, these British, these Irish, as he came to know them. So, since he had to publish anonymously, André Maurois was born with "The Silence of Colonel Bramble." In a week these twins were famous.

But still he was no more than a lucky fellow who had written a happy book. The successful scholar under Alain, the cloth manufacturer with some clever business ventures to his credit, the army interpreter with literary ambitions, had not inhabited the fourth estate. "In the spring of 1922 I received an invitation from M. Paul Desjardins, Professor of Literature at the Ecole Normale in Sèvres . . . to spend ten days during the summer at the Abbey of Pontigny." And there, in the midst of peace and jovial, intellectual companionship, began the welding of the elements that form the André Maurois we know.

Autobiography is written by old men about heroes they never met but with whom they are profoundly in love. This autobiography sounds honest and frank; the artist's technique has not much blinded his eye. He discloses, for example, the difficulties that his own good fortune and the impact of his grim family brought to his married life. Like the rest of us, he has become world-haunted in the end and serves the cause patiently while preserving his equilibrium.

"Like Voltaire we are witnessing the end of a world."

"What will our revolution be?" she asked, "Fascist? Communist?"

"That depends on forces it is impossible to gauge and over which we have no control."

"And what must we do."

"We must," I told her, "cultivate our garden."

EDWARD L. KEYES.

FICTION

The Seventh Cross. Anna Seghers. Little. $2.50.

POLITICAL PRISON and concentration camp, with all their melancholy associations of fear, vileness and the triumph of evil, are settings frequently recurring in the fiction of our day; familiar, too, are the themes of flight from the pursuing darkness and of heroic defiance of tyranny. "The Seventh Cross" holds a reader, then, not by the newness of its facts—very old are the agonies of such a man-hunt as it recounts—but by the richness of its implications. They are what matter, since from the beginning we know that of the seven who broke out of the Westhofen camp one is still alive and free when the disciplinary changes at the camp seem on the surface to close the incident. What that one fact means in fully half a hundred lives makes a fascinating story of a time just before the war in what we may describe as the nazi-occupied Rhineland.

Always Anna Seghers bids us remember not that six men failed in some measure, but that one succeeded. That tiny fraction of defeat for tyranny sets the cowed, the tortured, the almost hopeless atingle with an excitement out of all proportion to their tiny vicarious triumph. The logic of human history, if not of mathematics, supports the proposition. We see clearly that George Heisler is a symbol, not a hero, even to most of his fellow characters; his significance as a strong left-wing figure is but a minor element in the story and not a particularly convincing one. Of the seven fugitives, he is not the most admirable in character nor the cleverest nor the most pathetic. Whether worth the danger he brings them or not, George is, however, to many men and women the occasion of heartening deeds. What they do for him in his flight assures them that they still own their hearts and souls.

In both the whole effect of its feverish week and the crowding significant details, the story is brilliantly told.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

More memorable, however, than its technical proficiency is its wealth of moving human pictures—Father Seitz's burning of the discarded rags which the sexton suggested taking to the police; Mettenheimer's seeing in the sympathy of his workmen that "he had not been cast into Hell—he was still a man among men"; the quiet defiance of the local nazi puppet by a whole village when it gives Aldinger, the eldest of the fugitives, a decent funeral from his own home; and countless more testimonies to the hardiness of the good in human nature despite rampant evil.

OLIVE B. WHITE.

The Prodigal Women. Nancy Hale. Scribner. $3.00.

WOMAN as a child, an adolescent, a grown up. A saga of womanhood covering all of 704 pages, many of which contain penetrating observations on Boston's 200 families, how they live, play, love, and a good if not very new picture of the chaotic New York of the prohibition years and their aftermath; the years when there were speakeasies, when everybody was "divine," when the bands played "Oh gee . . . I'm mighty blue for you" and women were indeed "prodigal" of their hearts, of their bodies (very explicitly so in this book), of all but their souls which remained, it seems, strangely unawakened.

Miss Hale shows us—very ably—a Scott Fitzgerald world, without the poetic touch and the tenderness. Hector Connolly alone, a "wild Irishman," renegade Catholic, is moved by a deep unrest, a yearning which, with the help of a French Catholic woman, and the reading of Huysmans, Belloc and Maritain, leads him back to a faith he had never really lost.

There is some excellent dialogue, and since it is all about women, should one resent the somewhat overwhelming feminity of certain passages? The characters are genuine, and we are given an expert analysis of their psychological processes. But the link between them is tenuous. All in all the book is serious, well written, and represents considerable achievement, but the abundance of material makes it unwieldy.

FRANCES FERNEY.

The Valley of Decision. Marcia Davenport. Scribner. $3.00.

TIME was that on the last page of a feminine novel she would fling herself into his arms and then look up at him with shining eyes ready to face the world and confident of her peace and happiness for ever after. In contrast today's formula is rather shattering. There are rude awakenings and then the story goes on for generations. We have double-decker novels and triple-deckers and sometimes family sagas that keep on and on for volumes. So Marcia Davenport is in the current here. But it is a pity just the same that she did not stop where her story really ended. Particularly as "Book III—Claire (1933-41)" is in such large part an unsuccessful amalgam of the unnecessary remnants of her story and an account of the descent of the nazis upon the rest of Europe à la *Time-Life*. (After reading so many Berlin correspondents, I find fictionized versions of how it happened surrounded by prophecies that the author has concocted after the fact the height of inanity).

Once this dyspeptic comment is out of the way and the reader is duly notified that his work should be—and is not—done on reaching the end of page 577, attention should be directed to the volume's solid virtues. It is the story of Mary Rafferty and Paul Scott, of a shanty

IMPORTANT FALL BOOKS

ACROSS A WORLD

by John J. Considine, M.M., with the collaboration of Thomas Kernan. **"Splendidly written and superbly illustrated panoramic travelog of the Catholic missions . . . reviewing Catholic endeavor for the advance of the Faith in Asia and Africa, as it was seen during a journey from Rome out through Asia, and then across the Dark Continent. Dozens of delectable word pictures await the reader."—*America.* 400 pages. Illustrated. $2.50**

THE REED AND THE ROCK

Portrait of Simon Bruté

by Theodore Maynard. **Not since *Death Comes for the Archbishop* has there appeared so inspiring a biographical treatment of one of the French pioneer bishops of the United States. "A fascinating romance."—N. Y. *Times.* "As fully rounded and realized a portrait as American Catholic biography has as yet drawn."—*Saturday Review of Literature.* 273 pages. Illustrated. $2.75**

THE HOUSE ON HUMILITY STREET

by Martin W. Doherty. **Memories of the North American College in Rome. A former Chicago newspaperman, now a priest, describes a cherished experience shared by several generations of young men from all parts of the United States. Also, the unusual story of Father Doherty's own vocation to the priesthood. 269 pages. Illustrated. To be published Nov. 4th. $3.00**

SPIRITUAL READINGS FROM MOTHER ST. PAUL

Mother St. Paul's meditations on the seasons of the Liturgical Year and on the life of Christ selected from her "Christi" books. The very essence of the Mother St. Paul writings, formerly spread throughout a dozen or more books. 308 pages. To be published Nov. 4th. $3.00

DEATH AND LIFE

by Martin C. D'Arcy, S.J. **Must death end all? Father D'Arcy upholds the thesis that what we most prize in the world and are fighting to save has been bequeathed to us by those who believe in a future life. 180 pages. $2.00**

Order from your bookstore or from:

LONGMANS, GREEN & CO.

55 Fifth Ave., New York • 215 Victoria St., Toronto

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A HISTORY OF SOCIAL THOUGHT

By Paul Hanly Furfey

Starting with an outline of early society, its family and kinship usages, Dr. Furfey traces the history of social thought through the ages to the rise of formal sociology in the 19th century. Included is a survey of social thought in our country with special emphasis on Catholic social thought. $2.75

PHILOSOPHY FOR THE MILLIONS

By J. A. McWilliams

This fascinating and popular study of philosophy furnishes practical solutions to a multitude of pressing problems which confront everyone today. The author deals with current problems of distress, philosophy in government and business, and the role of the Christian in our present crisis. $2.00

THE STORY OF AMERICAN CATHOLICISM

By Theodore Maynard

For the first time, the history of the Catholic Church in America is given in one fascinating volume. This history—an absorbing picture of the main movements of American Catholicism—is a "must" book for every Catholic reader. $3.50

MACMILLAN • New York

THE GUILD BOOK SHOP

117 *East* 57 *Street, N. Y.* — *Plaza* 3-0225

Books: Theology, philosophy, biography, history, apologetics, fiction, belles lettres, current affairs, children's books. MISSALS handsomely bound. Books from all publishers—for everybody.

Lending Library: Over 1200 volumes of good Catholic books. Free for members of St. Paul Guild; non-members $1.00 deposit, rental fee 2c per day.

Christmas Cards: One of the finest collections of religious cards in the city. Order your cards today.

July-September Number of the

DUBLIN REVIEW

Feature articles by Christopher Dawson, Charles Williams, J. L. Benvenisti and others. Secure this important issue by sending $4 for a year's subscription (single copy, $1) to THE COMMONWEAL, 386 Fourth Avenue, New York, N. Y., sole American agent for the DUBLIN REVIEW.

Irish serving maid and her influence over the years upon a family of Pittsburgh steel operators. And be it said that except for one brief, agonized and unreal interlude, that influence was much to the good. "The Valley of Decision" is also a narrative of the growth of the American steel industry, of the shift from independent operation to amalgamation and even more of the fierce struggle of the steel workers for union recognition and decent working conditions. First it is the Irish and then the Czechs and Slovaks that man the plants and people the hovels near the furnaces. Some of the latter, the "Hunkies," are painfully aware of the contrast between the starkness of that black valley and the green fields they have left. Mrs. Davenport has spent months in Pittsburgh getting material for her book; she is a good reporter and it all rings true. Her picture of the intensity of the class struggle is not easily forgotten.

Environment as with most current novels and plays is the hero of the piece and most of the people are simply types. Yet in the course of the long narrative a few memorable characters emerge. It is Mary Rafferty who is the center of interest much of the time. Some readers will close the book with the feeling that they know more about the torsos and anatomy of the various women characters than anything else about them, however.

EDWARD SKILLIN, JR.

HISTORY

Storm over the Land. Carl Sandburg. Harcourt. $3.50.

THIS "Profile of the Civil War," as it is called by its author, is a brief history of the Civil War, taken mainly from "Abraham Lincoln: The War Years." It is enlivened with 60 halftone photographs and with 98 drawings, maps and sketches. It deals with men, rather than with issues. It is non-controversial. Written from the Northern viewpoint, it does make an effort to justify the destruction wrought by such leaders as Sheridan and Sherman. It does not admit that the Civil War was unavoidable. The part that Lincoln played as the war was about to break out is given a much more sympathetic treatment than that accorded to it by many other writers, especially among those who have written recently. Grant receives much attention, and practically all of it is favorable. The author also admired Lee. McClellan was not his favorite. Many brief biographical notes are inserted, and they are very well chosen.

Although there is no sustained effort to portray the life behind the lines in either North or South, enough of comment is added to give an impression of what each section was doing as the war progressed. A fair knowledge of the main events of the war is essential for a profitable reading of the book. Sandburg is not enthusiastic about war. Referring to Lincoln at Gettysburg, Sandburg writes: 'In a row of graves of the Unidentified, the boy would sleep long in the dedicated final resting place at Gettysburg. Why he had gone away and why he would never come back had roots in some mystery of flags and drums, of national fate in which individuals sink as in a deep sea, of men swallowed and vanished in a man-made storm of smoke and steel." Many similar passages of fine writing are found in the book, making it a literary contribution rather than a history as such. It will make the Civil War come to life for those who think of it in a hazy manner. It deals directly, clearly and honestly with the awful tragedy that is war.

PAUL KINIERY.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LITERATURE

Frank Norris, a Study. Ernest Marchand. Leland Stanford. $3.00.

THERE is no doubt that Frank Norris deserves a higher place in the annals of American letters than has been generally accorded him. This neglect in all probability is due to the fact that he emerged at a moment when the country, long steeped in the Victorian tradition, could not but be startled and shocked at the boldness of his realism, while it still awaited the birth-pangs of an awakening social consciousness. Very few were the voices that heralded his arrival, and later on, when certain of his books—"McTeague," "The Octopus" and "The Pit"—became more generally known, a certain inconsequence of theme, together with some rather glaring defects of style, seem to have blinded the eyes of contemporary critics to the essential merits of his work.

Naming himself a disciple of Zola (and thereby inviting a condemnation in advance), his realism consists in calling a spade a spade rather than in a conscious descent into the realm of pornographic detail. Even so such a realism shocked as compared with the only kind then known to his countrymen, that of Mr. Howells, which excluded all mention of sex. (In this matter Norris occupied a middle position between Zola and Howells in that he recognized the importance for the novelist, as a student of life, to probe the mystery of sex, while exhibiting a marked distaste toward embarking upon it himself.) But Zola, as is well known, was almost as much of a romanticist as he was a realist, and here his pupil follows him if not implicitly at least in all but an occasional aberration. In both men the tendency was strong to personify the great forces of nature (Fertility in "La Terre," Wheat in "The Octopus"), together with some of the strongest of man's instincts (Drink in "L'Assomoir," Gambling in "The Pit"). Both men were epic poets when in thraldom to their muse, Zola forgetting realism in his effort to construct in the Rougon-Macquarts a typical human family obedient in everything to the "laws" of heredity, the handmaid of Science; while Norris planned a trilogy (the last volume of which remained unwritten) to glorify the supremacy of wheat, the nourisher of man. When he began it, Professor Marchand tells us, he wrote a friend: "The Wheat series will be straight naturalism with all the guts I can get into it;" while a year later, "The Octopus" nearly completed, he had to write: "It is the most romantic thing I've done yet!" For Norris worshipped Hugo as well as Zola and was thereby tricked into melodrama provided it could be used symbolically, as when he buries one of his villains under a mass of the golden grain which is being loaded onto a freighter.

Another seeming paradox in Norris is this: although one of the first exponents of realism in this country, he is also, in Professor Marchand's words, "by every right the founder of the red-blooded school in America." The misunderstanding here rests upon the fact that the realistic movement in literature as known here was distinguished for its preoccupation with the everyday functions of the refined element of society in the East; while Norris operates preferentially upon the simpler populations of the Far West, including what is sometimes described as the "riff-raff" of San Francisco, his own town. Here we should expect the blood to run redder.

But most of all Norris was a pioneer in a field that before him lay entirely untilled—that of the sociological

Franklin P. Adams'
ANTHOLOGY OF LIGHT VERSE
INNOCENT MERRIMENT

390 selections of the most rollicking and very lightest of classical and contemporary verse. "A frolic volume." —CLIFTON FADIMAN. "Plenty of good entertainment." — *N. Y. Times Book Review.*
523 pages. $3.00

"It's swell! Wonderful! Hilarious!" —JOHN KIERAN

The new best-seller by the author of "ONE FOOT IN HEAVEN"
GET THEE BEHIND ME . .
My Life as a Preacher's Son
by Hartzell Spence

"Entertaining, amusing, endearing . . . heart-warming and wise."—*N. Y. Times Book Review.* "Some of the best clean fun put between the covers of a book in many a day."—*Philadelphia Inquirer. Illus.* $2.75

"His most ambitious and greatest achievement."
—CHARLES LEE, *Philadelphia Record*
Emil Ludwig's
THE MEDITERRANEAN *Saga of a Sea*

"His masterpiece. The fascinated layman will abandon himself to the intense delight of viewing in one breathless sweep the pageant of life in the Mediterranean basin since pre-historic times."—STERLING NORTH, *Chicago News.* Illus. $3.75

Whittlesey House · McGraw-Hill Bldg., N. Y.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE SONG OF TEKAKWITHA

THE LIFE AND STORY OF THE LILY OF THE MOHAWKS

VENERABLE KATERI TEKAKWITHA

A Narrative Poem in the Verse-form of "Hiawatha"

***by* Robert E. Holland, S.J.**

More Than 75 Illustrations Using Three Colors

***by* LeRoy H. Appleton**

A BEAUTIFUL BOOK FOR CHRISTMAS GIVING

At All Booksellers: $2.50

Ready December 1, 1942

FORDHAM UNIVERSITY PRESS

East Fordham Rd., Bronx, New York

ORATE FRATRES

The American Liturgical Monthly

- The greater the world crises, the more urgent our need of solid foundations for a spiritual renewal.
- "The primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit is active and intelligent participation in the liturgy" (Piux X).
- ORATE FRATRES treats of the liturgy from a doctrinal, devotional and practical viewpoint. Special emphasis on its relation to social reconstruction.
- Distinguished staff of American and European collaborators. Each issue, forty-eight pages. Subscription rates: U. S., $2.00; Canada, $2.25; Foreign, $2.50.
- Write for descriptive folder of pamphlets and booklets, and for sample of *Abbey Prints*, a new series of devotional cards symbolic of the Eucharist.

THE LITURGICAL PRESS

St. John's Abbey Collegeville, Minnesota

novel. He was the first litterateur to envision the potential evil to the body politic inherent in the giant corporations then arising all over the land to the applause of all that beheld them, and the first to embody that vision in his writing. In this he anticipated Upton Sinclair and the whole generation of "muck-rakers," providing in "The Octopus" an exposé of the Southern Pacific Railroad and its methods as telling as anything afterwards produced in this line, while immensely superior as literature in that the artist is never lost in the social reformer, but manages to speak through characters that move through the exciting scenes of the novel as real human beings existing in their own right. It is not perhaps too much to say that Norris, of all the writers of his day, and up to that day in this country, was the one most endowed with a sense of social justice—which did not much help to provide him with an audience.

Professor Marchand's scholarly essay should do something to direct renewed attention to this strangely neglected figure. Howells, almost alone among his contemporaries, was generous in his appreciation, but Howells came from the Middle West—the New England high brows were either unruffled or knitted in a savage discontent.

J. K. PAULDING.

Three Greek Tragedies In Translation. Aeschylus: Prometheus Bound; Sophocles: Oedipus the King; Euripedes: Hippolytus. David Grene. Chicago. $2.50.

TRANSLATIONS, as Gilbert Murray said, represent the translator's response to the original rather than the original itself. That is an observation which explains why translations are so transitory. Each generation sees the classic drama in the light of its own taste. For that generation, which it sees, *is* the original; but as time passes and that moment of taste disappears, its translation begins to look much more like the England of Pope or of Gilbert Murray than like Homer or Sophocles. It is therefore literally necessary for the Greek plays to be retranslated for each generation. These new translations were made as reading versions for modern undergraduates who study Greek tragedy in general drama courses. But this little book also must have considerable interest for those general readers who do not read Greek but wish to have some idea of what the Greek poetic drama was.

Gilbert Murray once said that the Greek mode of expression would often seem so bald as to antagonize a modern reader if it were rendered literally, and that he preferred to give a richer and more decorated version in accordance with the genius of English poetry. But for the modern reader it is precisely the blunt, pungent power of the Greek that is lacking from his mellifluous late-Tennysonian verse. As someone said, he left the rip out of Euripedes. Mr. Grene is writing for a different period and is writing a version to be spoken aloud rather than read to one's self. He uses a mingling of prose, blank verse and a free verse line for the choruses, that has three merits. It is a speaking version that is acceptable to the modern ear. It suggests better than any other modern translations I have examined the blunt, terse eloquence of the Greek verse. And it handles with a minimum of awkwardness the multitudinous allusive epithets, which to the Greek ear must have filled the plays with a constant echo of familiar memories, but which are apt in a translation to be obscure and tiresome. The moral dilemmas which man faces are timeless, since they are in the nature of man himself. The great situations of Greek

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tragedy retain their dramatic power in these translations. That is of interest, I think, to general readers.

Mr. Grene's introductory essays to each play, on the other hand, are also interesting, but to my mind are a kind of predominantly intellectual analysis foreign to the real genius of drama. It is not that the plays cannot stand such analysis. But the power of a drama lies in the impact of an esthetic and spiritual unity in which the organic wholeness of life is mirrored. The danger of such criticism is that one loses the drama in picking up the pieces. I advise the general reader to read the introductions after, not before, reading the plays.

E. P. RICHARDSON.

TRAVEL

Virginia Is a State of Mind. Virginia Moore. Dutton. $3.00.

Carry Me Back. Rebecca Yancey Williams. Dutton. $3.00.

A REVIEWER, born in that valley of humiliation that lies between two mountains of conceit, is disarmed by Miss Moore's admission in her foreword that "Virginians can't help bragging," and persuaded, by the time the last page of her volume is turned, that they have cause to be proud of their heritage, if not to boast of it. For this book is a *tour de force,* a compendium of all that has gone into the making of Virginia; it is thoughtful and wise and yet exuberant, rich in classical allusion, redolent of a countryside where Jefferson's Scotch broom bushes spread their golden bloom before the apple trees break into pink and white flower; it is replete with vivid anecdote, especially of Jefferson, his family and contemporaries. A novelist, historically minded, might find several characters to his taste in the thumbnail sketches of sprightly ladies of the Commonwealth; and the modern epicure, restricted by war rationing, must avoid Miss Moore's descriptions of Virginia cooking which she thinks may have originated in a "vast protest against the English variety." The work is fundamentally serious, an honest effort to describe how Virginians have come to be what they are, and to evaluate their contributions to life in the United States. Perhaps the approach to history is insufficiently critical; certainly nothing of the charm of the chronicle would have been lost had it been differently arranged and condensed; but it is a full and leisurely book, one to dally with and to savor.

Mrs. Williams might have done well to let the altogether fascinating Vanishing Virginian of her former book rest on his laurels, without attempting further to extend a satisfying portrait. "Carry Me Back" gives, by means of the rather cleverly revamped diary of an adolescent girl, a picture of the life of that Vanishing Virginian and his family in the year 1913. The matter is attenuated, the writing careless, but the author retains the gift for amusing narrative, and the story will doubtless lighten hours that might be darkened by thought of today.

D. H. MOSELEY.

BRIEFER

A Study of War. Quincy Wright. Chicago. 2 Volumes. $15.00.

YOUR REVIEWER admits that he has not read these volumes through. To do so would take a month of long quiet evenings. But he can report that to anyone who wishes a thorough study of what is today an all-absorbing matter, this work will supply handsome fodder.

Book Publishers Recommend

MODERN WARS AND CATHOLIC THOUGHT. By Don Luigi Sturzo. *In French.* The moral problems of modern warfare, viewed in the light of Catholic tradition and the pronouncements of the last three popes. Published by Editions de l'Arbre, Montreal, Canada. (Order through Book Service Dept., THE COMMONWEAL.) Paper cover.....$1.35

•

THE WAYS OF GOD. A little known essay of Saint Thomas Aquinas. Translated by Raïssa Maritain and Margaret Sumner. Heavy paper cover, in color, by A. de Bethune. Frontispiece by Gino Severini. Published by the Basilian Fathers of Assumption College, Windsor, Ontario. (Order through Book Service Dept., THE COMMONWEAL.) 25c

The ROAD to VICTORY

BY

Francis J. Spellman

Archbishop of New York, Military Vicar of the Armed Forces of the United States

A strong and stirring message of encouragement to every American. Archbishop Spellman probes deeply into the moral and spiritual diseases that infest modern civilization, explains the philosophy of construction in which he believes, and pleads for a world that will give freedom of conscience and freedom of thought, but not license, and freedom to destroy. $1.75

The author's royalties are donated to Army and Navy relief

at all bookstores **Charles Scribner's Sons**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books Make News

Although The Commonweal occasionally publishes special book numbers such as this one, every issue calls to our readers' attention important books of the day. What is more, it supplies a true picture of these books without fear or favor. An especially useful service in these days when so many books make news. To keep posted follow Commonweal reviews regularly.

Next Week's Articles:

CHURCH OF THE EVILDOERS, by Jean C. de Menasce, is a brilliant exposé of the low estate to which modern man, Christian and unbelieving, has fallen, together with a key to the way out.

GERMAN MUSIC AND POLITICS, by Max Graf, deals with such figures as Toscanini and Furtwaengler; Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and the philosophers; Wagner, Richard Strauss, and many others.

RUSSIA AND RELIGION, by Harry Lorin Binsse, tells what, according to the latest serious reports, is the status of religion among the Soviets and what its prospects are for the future.

Send for a Trial Subscription Today

------15 Weeks for $1------

FOR NEW SUBSCRIBERS

THE COMMONWEAL,
386 Fourth Ave.,
New York City.

For the enclosed $1 send me
the next 15 issues of
THE COMMONWEAL

Name .....

Street .....

City .....
10/30/42

The Inner Forum

Adios to the Mud Flats

LAY YOUR HAND, palm down, on the table. Visualize the palm and four fingers as representing a small part of the southern shore of Puerto Rico—and the thumb, spread apart from the rest of the hand, as Point Pozuelo, a narrow neck hooked out from the mainland at the municipality of Guayama. Space between the thumb and index finger is Jobos Harbor.

Across this harbor from Point Pozuelo—at the middle knuckle of the index finger—are the mainland mud flats of Puerto de Jobos. Some 200 farm laborer families live at Puerto de Jobos. Working in the sugar fields, with fishing as a sideline, affords them only the barest livelihood. The 10 most progressive families in 1941 earned an average of $275 from farm work and $104 from fishing and other non-farm employment—total, $379. Seldom have they been able to obtain gardens, toilets, pastures and similar essentials of farm and home life. A stench arises from the muddy strand, and millions of mosquitoes give the community a high malarial rate.

Father Henry Goetten, a Redemptorist priest, native of Boston, Mass., has been accomplishing much for Puerto Rico's poor through the Guayama Needlework Cooperative and other projects. He is known the length and breadth of the Island as the man who has done most for the underdog. Not long ago Father Goetten approached the Farm Security Administration with the idea of resettling part of Puerto de Jobos's impoverished people across the bay, on Point Pozuelo, now unoccupied but for goats.

The families themselves had been talking the idea over for months, and decided the way to get on their feet was to pool their efforts at fishing and farming on their own land.

To the Farm Security Administration, which is the agency in the US Department of Agriculture set up to help low-income rural families and which has been operating its "Region XIII" in Puerto Rico since July, 1941, the plan looked like a sound one, worth financial and advisory backing.

Already the Puerto de Jobos people have a cooperative association, Cooperativa Pozuelo. The Redemptorist Fathers plan to advance them $1,500 for a down payment on the $6,000 price for 150 acres at the tip of Point Pozuelo—a block of land which corresponds to the thumbnail of your outstretched hand-map. If present plans go through, ten of the mud-dweller families are expected to move to this haven across the bay at once. As Cooperativa Pozuelo becomes able, it will buy two more tracts until it has nearly 500 acres, the whole of the Point. That will take care of about 50 families. Others, who remain at Puerto de Jobos, will become non-resident members of the group's farming, fishing and handicraft projects.

The Farm Security Administration has approved an $8,000 loan to the Cooperativa Pozuelo to buy equipment for the enterprises through which they'll make their living.

The FSA loan will be repaid in annual installments beginning in 1943. The $3,500 advanced for fishing operations is repayable within five years, while ten years

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

are allowed for repayment of the full amount of the $4,500 included for farming.

For farming, the Point Pozuelo families will spend $1,000 for goats, and smaller sums for a wagon and several horses, for plows, harrows and small tools, for fencing, land clearing and pasture improvement, for a pick-up truck, a cyclone-proof shelter necessary to protect life and property, and for other operations. Each family will have its own small rent-free plot on which to grow potatoes, beans, yautia, gandules, tomatoes and other food.

For spare-time, part-time fishing, they will buy a small motor launch at $130 and five small sailboats for $1,500, fishtraps, nets and tackle for $600. They'll build a $500 packing shed.

After the war they'll also run a handicraft enterprise. Products may include needlework, bamboo and cocoanut fibre products, and weaving. But right now the export market is cut off, and the group will concentrate on their farming and fishing.

Cooperativa Pozuelo expects to be able to sell 75,000 cocoanuts a year, and 400 goats (keeping the remainder of the goat offspring each year to build up the herds). Sale of goat milk and cheese and seafood will form additional income. With imports restricted by the war, Puerto Rico's 2,000,000 people form a good market for meat as well as for fresh seafood. At present many Puerto Ricans taste meat but a few times during the year.

Each family which moves to Point Pozuelo will work up an individual "Farm and Home Plan" under Farm Security supervision. This plan will budget their year's income and expenses, and will guide them in carrying on their farming and fishing so as to produce the best possible returns. The families also will receive loans and grants for safe water systems, sanitary facilities, home furnishings, seed and fertilizer. They plan to move their present houses across the bay. Those who can't move their shacks will build new ones costing no more than $200. The families will get careful education in good farming and homemaking practices, not only from Farm Security but also from the Redemptorist Fathers. By boat, schools and churches are within 20 minutes of Point Pozuelo.

Members of the Cooperativa Pozuelo say "the day we move from Puerto de Jobos across the harbor to the new land on Point Pozuelo will rightfully be a day of thanksgiving."

CHARLES G. BURR.

CONTRIBUTORS

Jesse STUART is the author of "Men of the Mountains," "Trees of Heaven," "Beyond Dark Hills" and other books.

Theodore MAYNARD is a poet, historian, essayist and biographer. His latest book is "The Reed and the Rock."

W. H. AUDEN is a poet and critic, author of "The Double Man" and other books.

Rev. Edward F. GARESCHE, S.J., is head of the Catholic Medical Mission Board.

Haniel LONG is a poet living in Santa Fe. He is connected with the *Writers Press*.

Edward DUFF, S.J., was an instructor in Philosophy at Holy Cross College. He is now preparing for the priesthood at the Jesuit House of Studies, Weston, Mass.

Rev. H. A. REINHOLD, one of the founders of the Apostleship of the Sea, is stationed in Yakima, Wash.

Edward L. KEYES, M.D., is one of the original founders of THE COMMONWEAL. He contributes articles and book reviews from time to time.

Olive B. WHITE is the author of a number of historical novels, the latest of which is "The King's Good Servant."

Frances FERNEY is the pseudonym of a New York journalist.

Paul KINIERY is assistant dean of the Graduate School, Loyola University, Chicago.

J. K. PAULDING is a resident of New York, long a student of American literature.

E. P. RICHARDSON is assistant director of the Detroit Art Institute.

D. H. MOSELEY is a frequent contributor to THE COMMONWEAL.

Charles G. BURR is connected with the Department of Agriculture, but does not write in his official capacity.

The Family that Overtook Christ

by

REV. M. RAYMOND, O.C.S.O.

Author of "THE MAN WHO GOT EVEN WITH GOD"

WILL BE PUBLISHED THE END OF OCTOBER

At All Catholic Bookstores

P. J. KENEDY & SONS 12 Barclay St. New York

SETON HILL COLLEGE

Greensburg, Pennsylvania

Degrees: B.A., B. Music, B.S. in Home Economics

Pre-Professional Training for Medicine, Law, and Social Service, Teacher Education

Fourteen Major Departments **Honors Courses**

Accredited by The Association of American Universities

Holds national membership in The American Association of University Women

Women from 11 foreign countries and 37 American States.

PIUS X SCHOOL OF LITURGICAL MUSIC

Manhattanville College of the Sacred Heart

133rd Street and Convent Avenue, New York, N. Y.

Courses offered: Gregorian Chant—Gregorian Accompaniment—Choir Conducting—Liturgical Singing—Polyphony—Choral Class School Music—Theory—Harmony—Counterpoint—and other branches of music. Lessons in Organ—Piano—Violin—Voice.

Telephone: Edgecombe 4-1500

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BUYERS DIRECTORY

★ A classified alphabetical listing of approved sources of supply . . . products, services, etc. . . . for the Individual . . . the Home . . . the Institution. Rate for your message: 50c a line. Three lines minimum space. Discounts 10% for 13 times, 25% for 52 times.

BOOKS

★ Books: Used, Old, Rare.
For Librarians, Collectors, Readers.
Huge Stock. Reasonably Priced.
Catalogs free. Browsers Invited.
Want Lists Solicited. Libraries Purchased.
DAUBER & PINE BOOKSHOPS, INC.
66 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

★ Catholic Center for Browsers and Borrowers
ST. THOMAS MORE LENDING LIBRARY
1829 S. Gramercy Pl., Los Angeles, Ro. 5828.

★ OUT-OF-PRINT AND HARD-TO-FIND books searched for and quickly supplied at low prices. No charge or obligation for service. All subjects and in all languages. Genealogies, family and town histories. First editions supplied. Incomplete sets completed. Magazine back numbers supplied. AMERICAN LIBRARY SERVICE, Dept. 386, 117 West 48th Street, New York, N. Y. BRyant 9-5214.

HOTEL

★ COPLEY PLAZA HOTEL
Boston, Mass.
2 minutes from Back Bay R.R. Station

IRISH BOOKS AND GIFTS

★ Books, Belleek China, Linens. Catalogs.
IRISH INDUSTRIES DEPOT, Inc.
876 Lexington Ave. (near 65th), New York.

POSITION WANTED

★ Boys' director, supervisor for boys' school seeks position. Dramatist, musician. A-1 infirmarian. Reliable, energetic, good habits. Experienced. Highest references. Catholic. Salary open. Reply Box 109, THE COMMONWEAL.

RELIGIOUS ARTICLES

★ Unusually fine framed pictures. Also real paintings. Wood-carved crucifixes 16", $15 up. Christmas cards. *Liturgical Art Sales Co.* 32 Park Pl. (BEekman 3-4306) New York.

WAR SAVINGS

★ THERE IS NO BETTER INVESTMENT than the United States. Your country needs your money to beat the axis aggressors, to stave off inflation. Invest in your family, your home, the things you hold nearest your hearts.

BUY WAR BONDS AND STAMPS

Stamps cost 10c and up. Bonds are sold at $18.75 and more.

Stamps may be converted into Bonds. Bonds pay 33 1/3% interest if held for ten years. Both are redeemable at purchase price.

Invest 10% of your income in War Savings.

Educational

COLLEGES—WOMEN—NEW YORK

MARYMOUNT COLLEGE

Tarrytown-on-Hudson, New York. Conducted by the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary. Accredited. Liberal Arts. Confers B.A., B.S. degrees. National Defense Program. Pre-Medical, Secretarial, Home Making and Nutrition, Art, Music, Pedagogy, Journalism, Dramatics. Directed field trips in all depts. Athletics. Special two-year course. Extensions: 1027 Fifth Ave., New York City. Paris and Rome. Address Secretary.
Marymount Preparatory Schools: Wilson Park, Tarrytown, New York. Fifth Ave. & 84th St., New York City. Address Rev. Mother.

GOOD COUNSEL COLLEGE

White Plains, Westchester County, New York. Conducted by the Sisters of the Divine Compassion. Fully Accredited. Standard courses in Arts and Science, pre-medical. Journalism, teacher-training, secretarial studies, library science, fine arts. Unusually beautiful location. Extensive campus. Forty minutes from New York City.

COLLEGE OF MT. ST. VINCENT

Mount St. Vincent-on-Hudson, New York, N. Y. Conducted by the Sisters of Charity. Regional and State Accrediment. A.B. and B.S. Degrees. Teacher and Secretarial Training. Ninety-six acres bordering Hudson River. Twelve miles from Grand Central, New York City. For particulars address Registrar.

ACADEMY—GIRLS

ST. WALBURGA'S ACADEMY

630 Riverside Drive, New York City. Conducted by The Sisters of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus. Boarding and Day School for Girls. Primary, Elementary and High School Departments. Music, Art, Dancing and Physical Training Offered. Accredited by the Board of Regents, University of the State of New York, and by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. For particulars, Apply to Mother Superior.

PENNSYLVANIA

COLLEGE MISERICORDIA

Dallas, Pennsylvania. Conducted by the Sisters of Mercy of the Union. Regional and national accreditation. Early registration is desirable. Address: Registrar.

ROSEMONT COLLEGE

Rosemont, Pa. Catholic College for the Higher Education of Women conducted by the Religious of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus. Incorporated under the laws of the State of Pennsylvania with power to confer Degrees in Arts and Science. For resident and non-resident students. Situated eleven miles from Philadelphia on the Main Line of the Pennsylvania Railroad. Fully accredited. Telephone Bryn Mawr 4514. Address Registrar.

COLLEGE OF CHESTNUT HILL

Chestnut Hill, Pa. Conducted by the Sisters of St. Joseph. Accredited. Students prepared for graduate, medical and law schools, for high school teaching and secretarial service. Exceptional opportunities for students in Music and Speech. Gymnasium, swimming-pool and extensive fields for outside sports. Prespective students should make early application.

IMMACULATA COLLEGE

Immaculata, Pennsylvania. Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Fully Accredited. Bachelor of Arts majoring in Biology, Classical Languages, English, History, Mathematics, Modern Languages, Social Studies, and Pre-Legal. Bachelor of Science majoring in Biology, Business, Chemistry, Pre-Medical, Mathematics, Business Education, Economics, Home Economics. Bachelor of Music majoring Piano, Violin, or Voice. Public School Music. Swimming-pool, lake, campus 327 acres, athletics, riding, sports. View-book on request. 40 minutes from Philadelphia. Phone: Malvern 2201. Cable: Marimmac.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED